




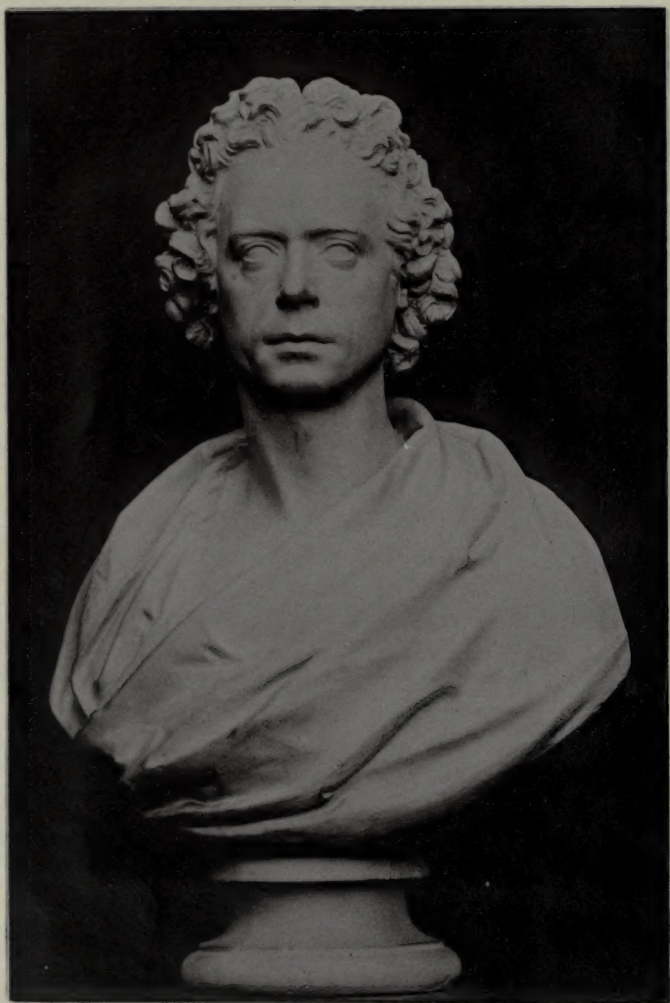
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FESTUS



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Philip James Bailey

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FESTUS

A POEM BY

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY



DEDICATION.

LONDON:

GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS, LIMITED

BROADWAY, LUDGATE HILL, E.C.

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DEDICATION.

MY FATHER ! unto thee to whom I owe
All that I am, all that I have and can ;
Who madest me in thyself the sum of man
In all his generous aims and powers to know,
These first-fruits bring I ; nor do thou forego
Marking when I the feat thus closed, began,
Which numbers now near three years from its plan,
Not twenty summers had embrowned my brow.
Life is at blood-heat every page doth prove.
Bear with it. Nature means Necessity.
If here be aught which thou canst love, it springs
Out of the hope that I may earn that love,
More unto me than immortality ;
Or to have strung my harp with golden strings.

1839.

PREFACE.

THE author, in preparing, on the fiftieth anniversary of its publication, a final revision of this poem, has been advised by friends whose opinions he much esteems, to foreshadow to a rising generation of students, a few words indicative briefly of certain leading features which have, more or less from the beginning, (as illustrating the ultimate triumph of good over evil), distinguished the work, from others conversant with a like class of topics; and to make some alterations in the current issue which, it is believed, will recommend themselves to the judgment of the observant reader.

The poem has been taken to be a sketch of world-life, and is a summary of its combined moral and physical conditions, estimated on a theory of spiritual things, opposed as far as possible to that of the partialist, pessimist and despairing sceptic, the belief of the misbeliever, so prevalent in our time; not only in regard to the creation, government and administration of the world by divine providence, but in its views as to the origin of the so-called mystery of moral evil; and in its general positions known as universalist, illustrative of the highest aspirations and the happiest future, here and hereafter of humanity. Here, however, it may be as well to premise that, substantially, the poem stands now, and indeed in most of its chief respects remains, unchanged; and it does so for the reason more especially, that very soon after its first appearance, the author perceived the original outline to be sufficiently extensive and elastic to admit almost every variety of classifiable thought, and reasonable enlargement of purpose upon such matters as human faith, morals and progress could not fail to present to the ripening experiences of life. In the course, however, of years, it becomes almost inevitable, in the case of a living writer, that some things shall have been added, some things, for sundry reasons, varied, and some things taken away.

To begin, for instance, with what has been varied; it may be stated that in compliance with the representations already made public, of more than one notable writer and fully competent critic, and in accord with conclusions of the author's more matured thought, all the utterances ascribed in previous editions of the poem to various divine interlocutors are now assigned solely to one uni-personal Deity, being more suitable, we are led to believe, to the purpose and position of poetry generally, among the arts, in modern monotheistic times, during which the expansion of the horizon of the moral universe has at least equalled that of the material; and certainly as being more congruous with the philosophic tendencies, at the present day, of religious thought, in which the unity and infinity, alike inseparable from each other, and in themselves indivisible even in conception, of the Divine Nature, is unquestionably, and for ever established.

The parts that have been taken away are several passages of an almost exclusively theological cast that bore but a distant relation to the ruling

motives of the invention, as a whole, and a few songs and lyrical effusions, some of them pretty general favourites, which though missing from their accustomed place will be found comprised more appropriately it is thought in a collection of minor miscellaneous verse intended presently to see the light.

In regard to additional matter admitted into the text; the Angel-world, the Star-flight of Luniel and Festus, and considerable portions of the Spiritual Legend, the first for sometime withdrawn, have now been all re-adjusted and brought more palpably into parallel with the progressive action of the story; while, along with the closing war of good and ill, in which the souls of that generation are represented as determining by their own free choice of sides, their future spiritual destiny; the blending of sacred millennial aspirations forenoted of old to be ultimately verified, as well as the conjecturally realized triumphs of humanitarian theories, secular but not irrational; and the happy results of pious and inspired charity in the treatment of subdued evilhood, takes each its place as an integral segment of the circle to which all belong.

Certain changes less or more organic, in the constitution of the poem as at this moment it presents itself, being thus accounted for, the writer far from seeking to apply to it any formal or minute analysis, but being desirous merely to supply the unaccustomed reader with a brief prescript, regarding its primary and more prominent objects and aspects, trusts confidently that upon a few such heads as construction, characterization, main scope or tendency, and special note of difference from other works occupied with similar, if not equally comprehensive, schemes, and which not many of the criticisms likely to fall into a stranger's hands have grasped very effectively, the following remarks may suffice to prepossess the reader with a serviceable summary of the work now in his hands.

Viewed structurally then, the poem will be found through all its semi-century or so of scenes, one continuous whole; resolving itself, upon examination, not into books, or acts, but into twelve or more groups, celestial, astral, interstellar and terrestrial, solar, planetary, and one other, the sphere of the Infernals; that is to say, into so many clusters of sections subordinated into seven classes, finally reducible into three, Heavenly, firmamental, earthly; throughout variously distributed.

With regard, for example, to the celestial scenes, three in number, with two of which the poem opens and terminates; the first shadowing forth predictively the forewarnings and decrees of divine providence, afterwards to be embodied in the action of the story; the last, which is completive, showing wherein the main issues are summed up and justified; while both are seen to be divided centrally by a mid heavenly section, judicial and punitive in character, of the same elevation as the others, and which, while securing a symmetrical arrangement of the interjacent portions, reflects equally upon the preceding and succeeding developments of the narrative.

Of the terrestrial scenes, more numerous, as might be expected, than those of any other class, devoted to the earthly experiences of the hero, his loves, his friends, his companions, his adventures, the temptations and trials by which he is tested, and the offences of pride and passion by which he is temporarily overcome, his aspirations and shortcomings, his penitences and griefs, his voluntary self-demission of the surpassing and so to speak miraculous gifts and privileges with which he has been

endowed, and his gradual advance morally and spiritually from the world chaos of conflicting partialist and imperfect beliefs to the sufficing system of simple and philosophic truth to which he at last attains, it is at this time unnecessary to speak. The story, which as a whole more regards the future than the passed or the present, comprises and connects all these particulars, having, besides a plan overt, what may be called an under plan; the latter mainly concerned with the initiation and perfection of a social but secret agency of the world's wisest well-wishers, who are supposed in every state and country throughout the globe to be actively engaged in the removal of every cause of national animosity in men's hearts, preparatory to such a condition of things as can only morally issue in the establishment of universal peace among all peoples; the culmination of which imaginary policy proving precisely coincident, in point of time, with the openly announced impending end of the world as told in the very first scene, and towards the conclusion shown realized; and coincident, in point of fact, with the covert but philanthropic action of the sages of all lands in elevating to a throne of universal peace, a single sovereign soul, both are shown ultimately to convene, and make one.

Interspersed with these, the several clusters of the supramundane scenes will be found to be occupied chiefly with the assertion and illustration of the unity of God's moral law, in analogy with that of the physical, as alike universal, eternal and all sufficient, in contrast with the views of a late eminent but eccentric metaphysician, which amount, it cannot be denied, to hypothetical polytheism. Here and there, and among the interspaces between star and star, where almost nothing more is brought forward scenically than what the simple ideas of duration, extension, distance and magnitude abstractedly imply; and not all inaptly therefore perhaps dedicated to legendary narrative, with divers moral and metaphysical speculations will be found, such as those connected with spiritual pre-existence, soul discipline throughout all spheres, the efficacy of prayer, and the everlasting validity of the prophet-preached principle of penitence; topics in themselves neither uninteresting nor unimportant, nor in their high and comprehensive scope, inappropriate to those rare and rarely reachable regions in which they are represented to occur.

Further, in relation with matters such as those pertaining to that mysterious spiritual future, which, dependent as it is upon action, may be said to be in a certain sense, always with us, the enlargement, will possibly be noted, since its first appearance, of The Star-flight of Festus and the angel Luniel, which traversing the astral signs of the sun's annual course, present a fair field for the indulgence of conjecture upon those theories of preparatory ghostly purification proper to brighter spheres, with which such bards and seers as have elected or aspired to present in their works any passable rationale of the moral universe, have from time to time familiarized the world, before the divinely conceded entrance of human spirits even those of the great and good, patriots and sages of old, as recorded for us by some of their "least earthly minds," upon the full fruition of their predestined heritage. These may be taken, though in ever so inadequate a degree, not only to typify to the ardent aspirant after eternal perfections the many glorious species of possible felicity in a future state so, figuratively, conveyed; but also, a novelty in serious verse, to indicate a boundless variety of directions in which, besides the soul-exalting worship of Deity, the highest hopes,

the largest life, the broadest extension of faculties, and the noblest exercise of human duties, not less than spiritual prerogatives, may be looked forward to, and enjoyed.

Turning, in the meantime, in order to complete and conclude our brief inspection of this class of scenes, the supernatural, which forms an essential element of the fiction, to the instance, exceptional in its nature, of the sphere of the Infernals, or Hell Purgatorial, answering morally to that antichthonal and hypothetical sphere, though invisible in the physical order of things, which early Greek philosophy found herself at the very outset of her career constrained to demand as a necessary counterpoise to the insoluble difficulties and rampant anomalies sensible throughout the actual system of things, and in default of which exemplification of God's severe but rational equity, the teaching as a whole embodied in the work were manifestly imperfect, it will be seen, nevertheless, that this judicial section has designedly features of a remedial and ameliorative quality, analogous to those shown during the current period, by civilized society, in the treatment of its criminal law-breakers; which strongly and pointedly differentiate the story from all preceding poetical adumbrations of the place of so-called endless and hopeless torment. In this condition or position, place or state, necessarily abides the obstinate and unrepentant sinner of all worlds; but whence, by ministry of the angelic and compassionate sons of God, divine clemency has provided, as in more than one instance exemplified, a means, if availed of duly, of self-deliverance; and it is in the collation and adaptation of these two sections just passed under notice, in which soul is represented as undergoing in due order, the just judgment of heaven, because of offence, and the self imposed penalties of penitent conscience, prior to that loftier and happier course of self emendative discipline, and spiritual advancement symbolized by the varied experiences recounted in *The Star-flight*; and which enure according to the poet's creation, and his conception of the moral world, until, consistently with its plan, final felicity is universally won; and the character of Deity vindicated, as one who having righteously made man responsible for his deeds will still not render a creature of finite faculties, whether as regards active forces or powers of passion, amenable to fines, infinite, and out of all proportion possible to their causes. Thus his nature and essence, as a Being of unassailable sovereignty and consequently imperturbable equity is demonstrated; and one of the implicit but cardinal purports of the poem plenarily achieved.

Passing on therefore from these and like aboriginal rudiments of a fable not indebted for its peculiarities to the somewhat newly-rationalized divinity of the day, to the next head, that of characterization which appears naturally to express itself in a few primary and typical conceptions, such as, first, that of Deity which has already been touched upon as above, reverently; and which will be found represented, and in opposition to the pantheism, the nature-worship, and the man-worship, all equally idolatrous, of our times, as a personal Infinite; one whose infinitude, if personality signifies, in any sense, those attributes or qualities which distinguish one individual entity from all others, constitutes his personality; an affirmation which may doubtless surprise certain censors who ignorantly or unfairly have accused of Pantheism a work that from its first page to its last, abounds with witness to the existence of the one and sole Infinite, the eternal, almighty, and

voluntary creator of the world, who containing in himself, and pervading, the universe, and existing in a manner which to us incomprehensible, is still not wholly by finite intelligence inapprehensible; but, in a like sense to that which Pauline Pantheism, as it has been called, presents to us, namely that of the Great Spirit in whom we live and move and have our being, as an Infinite, always and everywhere present to us; a universal conscience cognizant of our every act, perfectly and convincingly knowable; we, in the meantime seeing and knowing that all the acts of a finite being, along with the being itself, are alike commensurables; but that the eternity which pertains only to Deity, is with aught, or with all, created, incommensurable and incommunicable; and that whatever dogma or decree is metaphysically inconsistent with reason's demonstrable conclusions, can never be theologically, nor scientifically, tenable.

Next, in accord with all sacred traditions, ancient and orient, that of angelhood in its double capacity, on the one hand of a mighty hierarchy, loyal naturally and by all-sufficient reason, to its bounteous Creator, a world of holy ministrant intelligences, guardians of orbs, of nations, of souls, shown in vital and beneficent relations with various personages of the poem, the main events connected with which, such as the destruction and re-creation of the earth, the visitations extended to other spheres, the Initiations, the foundation of a world-wide empire, and many other instances of the marvellous, being, it is taken for granted, of sufficient dignity to justify, æsthetically, the invoked presence or aid of superior powers;—and, on the other, of that false, fallen, and as yet impenitent host, of whom the head, the tempter, the flatterer, the deluder of men, the Lucifer of the story, stands intended to represent our generalized or abstract idea of evil as a principle, if we may so speak, temporally impersonate; endowed with certain almost spatial dignities that serve, at least from a poetical point of view, to individualize a character, which in its prospective rehabilitation yields only in the interest it attracts to that inspired by the position of the protagonist.

And lastly, of Humanity generally, under its twofold aspect, primarily, spiritual, exemplified in two instances; one recently released from bodily bonds, and passing through the process of probational purification; another, rejoicing in assured beatitude; secondarily, as outlined in the person and career of the hero and his companion characters, with such peculiarities and qualifications of gift and temperament as pertain to their chief, and the various members of the poetical circle alluded to, as suffice to vitalize the framework of the pageant, and demark it from the range of simple allegory.

Of the general scope and nature of the story, the reader, even if it be his first essay, keeping in mind what he may have already gathered from the foregoing remarks; from the spirit of the teachings they convey indirectly, or more directly illustrate, from the general reputation of the work, such as that expressed in the words of one of its critics intimating the aim of the poem to be the exhibition of "a soul gifted, tried, buffeted, beguiled, stricken, purified, redeemed, pardoned and triumphant;" of a soul, it may be added, passing through and from knowledge, to wisdom; from passion and worldly and frivolous pleasures, to heart purity and spiritual happiness, a philosophic creed and a comprehensive calm of mind; from the tyranny of doubt and the benumbing influence of contra-

dictory and incredible beliefs, to the certainty of assured faith in simplest and amplest truth; from voluntary humiliation and self-denudation of all temporal and extrinsic gifts and privileges, to the enjoyment of perfect and unlimited power, accomplished on the appointed day, when mankind, by enlightened self-development, and the preventient will of God, shall have arrived at absolute and universal sovereignty over the powers of nature, and have rendered subservient to common use, all the conquests and the treasures of science, all the best institutions and safeguards of civil society;—the reader, being thus informed, it is the author's impression, will scarcely require any further details before commencing his perusal of the pages before him.

Upon the execution of the poem, which has been called by some of its censors an epic drama, and which certainly belongs rather to the order of the many-stringed harp than to the lyre, it does not become the author to speak. Criticism, which has not been lacking either in the old world or the new, may be said, with a few minor exceptions, to have fairly enough and even generously discharged its always honourable functions. And if not any poem,—agreeably with the somewhat denunciatory decree of one of the mediæval councils, *omnia poemata hæretica sunt*,—precisely satisfies a rigidly orthodox pietist, it is some consolation to a delinquent of this class if, in his choice of heresies, he thinks he has done his best to favour a simple creed which comprises in its consecrated elements a belief in the benignant providence of God, in the immortality of the soul, in the harmonized gospel of reason and faith combined, in the just, discriminative and equitable judgment of the spirit after death by Deity, and in the delightful duty of aiding upon earth the peaceful, morally progressive and voluntary self-evolution of Humanity as one brotherhood—an eclectic and philosophic symbol anticipated towards the end of the work as destined eventually to be everywhere on earth welcomed and established, and one which, however much in some quarters misunderstood, yet in its original inception and design spaciouly and presciently conceived, has since been not inconsistently nor immethodically carried out, to the ultimate achievement of all that from the first was promised or predicted.

BLAKEHEATH,

May, 1889.

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FESTUS.

PROEM.

EARTH's and time's end, man's rise progressive, add
His happier reascent and great return
Godwards ; and freely chosen of spirit delaps'd ;
Happier in reascent, than in his fall
Mournful, and through all purifying spheres
Perfective, let the bard his harp restrung,
Chaunt ; and prophetic faith in union meet
With philosophic reason charm the ear ;
One law of penitent self amendment, due
From faultful conscience, the whole moral world,
(As Nature's gravitative, cohesive, force
This sensible) binding ; evil's source and cause,
And reason of being ; mystery none ; its fine ;
Add, self discrowned its end ; good's faithful war
Fatefraught 'gainst ill ; ill how o'ercome in orbs
Angelic, how in ours ; time's tidal hour
Obliterative of Being, when most at one,
Man's universal soul, thus artwise typed
In individual guise ; man, joyful man,
In moral pomp enthroned, shall all things king,
All natural powers, all social states, in peace.
Sing we then, now, of restitutive times ;
Of confidence in God, and good ; for know,
This time is equal to all time that's gone,
Of like extent ; not, as in grave regard,
Recognizant of the passed, ashamed to weigh
Its wisdom with our forbears ; nor its face
Hide 'fore the future ; each is missioned here
To ends like worthy of its sender, God.
Him therefore let us bless too, and take heart ;
All ages are his offspring, and all worlds
Form from his breath like dewdrops out of air ;
He life in all infusing. Nor is earth's orb
Outlawed or excommunicate. This our God
Is still as kind, his gifts like wondrous fair,
Unlimited, even as when the wind first blew.
Still shines his sun on the grey rotting rock,

Keen, pure, as o'er the primal matter once,
 Ere floods, marmoreal now, had smoothed their couch
 Of perdurable snow, or granite wrought
 Its skyward impulse from earth's hearth of fire,
 Up to insanest heights ; or thunder oped
 His cloudy lips, and spake. Immutable he,
 All things to himwards, spiritual, natural, show
 Unvaryingly of change. God, nature, man,
 Life's universal threehood, man perceives
 E'er to each other that they have been ; and souls,
 Like in the mass, but differenced in themselves,
 With special gifts, duties and joys, he makes,
 In such wise, blesses and inspires, that each,
 Teaching themselves and others, him may learn.
 To those come gifts to enjoy the world, to gain,
 To cultivate, amuse, adorn ; to these,
 Who live alone with God and nature ; smile
 With the sun for mirth, or sadden with the moon,
 And the elements and their spirits our kin, as men ;
 Boons too unasked, unmeasured as the light
 Which lights at countless points the formless whole.

Such now, Heaven's seers, in things eternal taught,
 Skilled soulwise to lay bare the heart of the world,
 Know that while elemental change, locked round
 In self succedent course, may nature serve
 As God, in spirit, progress alone of soul
 Is to him dear as its existence ; know
 The moral realm in us expansible, ever
 Greatening with speed accumulative, the rays
 Of Heaven's authentic sphere pierce more and more
 The obstructive dark of ignorance ; know, in fine,
 This age, ours, happier, amiable than all
 Passed, in that God who witness lacks not ever
 His ways to vindicate, now breathes among men
 More of his own humanity ; and earth,
 Mellowed by westering suns, her teachers teach
 A broader, kindlier message ; show how need
 Cored in our nature for divine commune,
 Trust in a holy future, largelier planned
 Than doubtful pride deems safe ; makes strong the strings
 Of man's heart to endure. Nay, should all schemes
 By angel, and angelic soul, here sown
 In love's behalf, for human fellowship,
 Of loftiest scope, fail time by time, to fruit ;
 Yet social life grown peaceful, grown serene,
 Grown saintly sweet and pure, as th' orb, in meek
 Enthusiasts' dream conceived, by art refined
 To gas ; and seas dried up to a vaporous film,
 Might fitly seem to seek ; a future filled
 By faith ; supplanter not of reason she
 But supplementer ; proves, to eyes which view
 Things coming as things present, and things passed,

Man's powers adjustable with God's ends designed,
 And being perfected. Souls such, content
 With simplest fare ; (for Wisdom's board rejects
 Mere dainties ; nor to any sets she forth
 More than her homely bread, sweet olives, mead,
 Cheer hospitable, and sacred salt, a meal
 This with God's grace,) feast and felicitate each
 The other, on like aims, means ; they her thanks
 Most winning, and her stateliest smile, who spread
 The mystic welcome of her heavenly house
 Stintless ; and standing by her gates invite
 All blameless spirits to share the feast of God.

Each race hath had its revelation, all
 Diversely imperfect ; and though rational light
 Imparting plenteously, light yet bedimmed
 By mean less luminous passed through, prophet soul
 Bard, sovereign, saint or lawgiver, all heaven moved,
 Better is yet to come ; completive, clear,
 Eclect, refined. Man once in spirit one,
 His primal thought of worship, sacrifice
 Of guilty life or innocent, shadowy type
 Of that to be, self-sacrifice, through life
 Of animal passions, lower cravings, self's
 Unworthier ends, to truth's great cause, proved true
 But more effectually, sincerely proved,
 Shall, in the spirit, the only true receive.
 Who now the world's wide scripture, God writ, best
 Interpret, the interlinear version use
 Of spiritual light authentic as the first
 Of reason's utterances, which to us shows
 The bearing, meaning, and intent of things,
 And God's eternal purpose perfected
 In them, and all spheres like compacted, tuned
 To heavenly lyings foreconceived of old,
 Which tell of their great author, tell in joy.
 For poesie being a thing divine of God,
 Who made his prophets poets, and the more
 We feel of poesie we become like God,
 In love and power creative ; under-makers :
 So, song being of the supernatural thought
 Connatural utterance, solely can the world's
 Unbounded beauty speak, the unceasing soul's
 Perfective fall, terrestrial tests, re-rise ;
 And the premortal concords of pure mind,
 Made and creative, show at last resumed.

True fiction hath a higher end, and scope
 Wider than fact ; it is nature's possible,
 Contrasted with life's actual mean ; and gives
 To the conceptive soul an inner world,
 A loftier, ampler, heaven than that wherein
 The nations sun themselves. In that bright sphere,
 Behold the mental creatures of the me

Whose names are writ highest on the rounded crown
 Of fame's triumphal arch ; the shining shapes
 Which star the skies of that invisible land.
 Where earthly immortality dwells, with sage
 Hero and seer, her sceptred lieges, bard,
 And all souls vowed to truth. Among such, let ours,
 Whom fabulous wars, nor wars too true, nor rise
 Of realms or fall, nor thrones o'erthrown allure,
 Like that interior empire in our own
 One spirit ; as with the elements of mind's orb,
 Stern quatrain of the moral world, good, ill,
 Choice and necessity, struggling, sing, the field,
 (And what we are deepliest mixed with, God and man
 Boots most to know ;) where God the all good ; the world's
 Evil ; and man wherein are both ; all said
 Of Deity's said in reverence and in love,
 Deploy their forces. These, thought's ultimate forms,
 In mutual bearings traced, all teach us, good
 Immortal, as of God, for God to know
 In nature ; nature know in God, unites
 Both reason and faith ; teach evil here latent, there
 Patent, but all-where test of spirits ; choice, need,
 Like light's electric force twin poled in us,
 And all soul ; teach, that we our being have,
 We of this mortal mixture, in the same law,
 (God-given, to prove by arbitrary grace
 Him free of all necessity in his act)
 As heaven's intelligences of all ill pure ;
 And the dread Hadëan shades, endangering space
 Between astral worlds, and interceptive ; teach
 Virtue and reason attributes divine,
 Deathless, (not finite qualities, though to us
 Seeming by causal distance from their source,
 The absolute, dwindled,) changeless ; justest proof
 Of soul, the outbreath of Deity. But whilst
 To man for wilful wrong meet recompense
 Be due, the right renewal of pure will
 And self amendment his approval so wins
 As to involve soul safety to all time.
 Souls virtuous, know, the souls elect of God ;
 Albeit souls sinless not may aid his ends.

Now that the all-wise Infinite, when free
 He made soul finite, should soul's choice preview,
 Needs all must judge ; such forecast act nor thought
 Forced upon us implying at his hands
 Which framed and know our mutable life ; who views
 Reverently. God's nature in itself will own
 He sole hath full free will whose will is fate ;
 Knows too, that in humanity Godwise weighed
 Freewill is but necessity in play,
 The clattering of the golden reins which guide
 The thunderfooted coursers of the sun.

But introspective man, while ne'er in truth
 Of more than limited freedom seized, in will.
 Word, deed, yet knows himself throughout his life,
 This petty coign and segment of the eterne,
 As virtually choice-free ; nor more would ask ;
 He gladdening that God only knows all fates,
 Even, as contrariwise the ship, informed
 With serviceable fire, obeying nought,
 As seems, but her own and iron-hearted force ;
 To flowing tide, tide ebbing, or adverse
 Indifferent ; reckless of storm, or breeze
 Weak as babe's parting breath too faint to stir
 The feather held to it ; yet her secret self
 Knows liege with Nature's elements, and as much
 Thrall, thrice disfranchised of all liberties,
 As the white-boomed barque that woos the wind
 With welcoming arms, and to each whispering gust
 Yields, murmuringly assent. For either's course
 He only answerable whose choice of times
 And freights is such as shipment shows of goods
 Not incommensurable in that high haven
 Man's spiritual craft is bound to. But who, because
 Men unforewistful, eye not act's last end,
 How should they till they see with God ? deems man,
 Set he his heart contrarious as he may
 'Gainst God, can nought do but work out His will,
 Though at an infinite angle, for life's use
 Therefore responsible not ; confounding laws
 Of being and of doing, deepliest errs.

Laws there are twain man serves ; the law of law,
 Race, custom, creed, time, conscience, circumstance,
 Chance ; law superficial this ; who breathe the light
 Of spiritual virtue, know God's will towards good
 Of all He hath made, directed ever ; (such
 Summed ultimately in this, Himself to know ;)
 The law of laws, all central, vital. These
 To imblend, by holy art, to cultured man
 All excellence and all blessing means. Who join
 With love sincere of truth, good act, good will,
 Just life, pure conscience, 'scaping so the world's
 Self-sentenced servitude to fond desires
 Inequitable, and selfish pride to outvie.
 And not by bettering serve, men, reunite
 In free perfection with Divinity, here.
 Such are heaven's secret heirs, the adopt of God,
 Pure souls of astral and æonian strain,
 Unknown, unnamed, unblazoned. These be they
 Whose souls though chastened here, yet chosen from first,
 Born of the eternal seed of heavenly life,
 Light's golden generation into time
 Breathed Godwise, He translates to bliss divine,
 The primal final total state of Heaven,

And normal perfectness in Him. But whilst
 God's boundless love predestinative, and shown
 In soul from the world outchosen, his power displays
 Prerogative and freedom, His great end,
 Touching all moral Being, its progress just
 In virtue and judgment, by the pure plain law
 Of right and truth like needful seems, to prove
 Heaven's equity, and to difference good from ill.
 What's done, or ill or good, not earth nor heaven
 Can all undo ; but wilful ill done, soul
 Self-humbled for the pride which thereby God
 Challenged, such ill confessed, how grievous ! may
 Be of God absolved ; and earnest will and act
 The balance to restore, and more, of good,
 Unsettled by Sin's hand, much expiate, due
 To justice most, if mercifully construed,
 As promised by the all-faithful, and man needs.

Evil and good are God's right hand and left.
 There is but one great right and good ; ill, wrong
 Dense, vast howbeit to finite mind, to him
 Omniscient, shadows show, not substances.
 Nothing can be antagonist to God ;
 (Let contest be 'twixt equals,) in pure power,
 Nor right, against the All-just One ; Him, who all
 Controlling, sanctions trial-tests, which minds
 Feeble and pitiable, temptations call.
 While even to some of limited powers confessed,
 But strong in stern resolve, so, heaven sustained,
 By ministry of evil, whose reason sole
 Of being, is that it prove, conscious or not,
 Promoter of God's ends in sifting souls
 Finite, but free, for good, good stands forth clear.
 Who reads aright God's world-book thiswise learns,
 He ever makes for bliss twofold, His own,
 And theirs he hath made, all life ; (no meaner end
 Worthy of him can be, nor just toward them :)

Who read not in the blessed belief that souls
 All may be saved, read, wretched to no end ;
 Made were we to be saved ; to live in love,
 Peace, holy joy of spirit, and in the light
 Of his pure all-presence ; we are of God.
 That godlike man, for this cause, should, like God
 Show somewhat, strikes not strangelier than that earth
 Favours her sun-sire. All her elements
 Are his ; his, more ; more perfect. This, flings off
 A planet æriform ; by twin laws ruled ;
 Of self-impelling force within, the one ;
 And one the ambient power necessitous,
 Star crushing, limitary of act, which curves
 Ambition's course ; and that, a creature, man ;
 Say, rather, a creation, God breathes forth,
 Time conquering, conquering space ; dependent ; free.

Swayed by these truths, and compassed, as by stars
 Earth in her course, our story, mingling life,
 Not cursorily, with things on high, but scenes
 Showing of heaven and earth as body and soul
 In our humanity linked, we thankful, learn
 How God by e'er creating and His own
 One Being imbreathing through the sentient whole ;
 How too by ruin of evil, and good's great field
 By finite force for God won ; for that cause
 Assorted, and when failing, made in the end
 Just, pure ; He doth eternize joy ; and make
 Good infinite by remaking all in Him.
 Our thoughts are bounded but by the infinite.
 What comes before and after the great world,
 Deep in light's secretest abyss, and life's
 Immensity most reserved is ours to muse,
 Not to declare ; where finite reason ends,
 Faith leaps ; and finds firm ground in the divine.
 God, thus, our Saviour, still with spirit humane,
 Communes ; with some in lifelong sacrament,
 Faithwise ; which, rounding all activities
 Of soul, a higher faculty than reason
 Shows, though of brightest revelative power,
 As the snowheaded mountain riseth o'er
 The lightning, and applies itself to heaven ;
 A faculty which meaning gives to time ;
 Sanctity to man's kingly blood ; and like,
 And equal interest in God's bounteous ends.

Wherefore the world, of mean believings sick,
 Of partial creedlets, most in mysteries rich,
 And sophistries, waits wearying for the truth,
 Now, like an angel on the wing from Heaven.
 For, as when, storms gone, each cloud-ghost, vapoury, vast,
 Each shape, sky-menacing, the uneternal brood
 Of misconceptionous fear, by ministering wind
 Routed, and hurled to absolute void ; we, strewn
 Luxurious, on the crag's crown, nought thence seen
 Save ocean's quivering outline, sharp as death,
 Cutting the horizon of the after world ;
 The welkin's luminous and exhilarant blue,
 Eternity made visible, which o'erhangs
 Changeless, this changeful sphere ; complacent, eye
 Those unimagined heights, aërial, calm,
 Of tempests hidden, not touched ; so earth's mis-faiths,
 Seedlings of death and superstition, foul,
 Or foolish, or of mountainous falsehood, fled
 From off the face of never mutable truth,
 One, indivisible, sole, we feel in this
 Like verity, God's infinite fatherhood ;
 A faith if formless, boundless ; man's broad soul
 All satisfying with permanent peace. The world
 Is God's great will in act, heaven in repose ;

Earth is Heaven's floor ; and as of time's vast shows
 Or small, our God, the omnipotent operative,
 World-sire, the all-parent, first and last of Being ;
 Whose eye-blink kindles suns, whose glacial breath
 In sad reproof congeals ; imbreasts, doubt not, of all
 The eternal image ; and, as in temporal wise,
 The sun, sole habitant of the tented sky,
 The enlightener of all planets, would be adored ;
 Who yet with minute beauty all life's fields
 Impearls, and things most momentary sublimes ;
 Still in each fairy orblet of the dew
 Housed, ere to his breast assumed ; so, too, the bard,
 Who heavenly objects owns with earth's, while light
 And beauty scattering over all he loves,
 And feels with, trusts but to himself all hopes
 Artwise of lasting record in man's mind ;
 He from all else thus varying, that alone
 While lightening all soul with the inner light
 Conscious in him, in others he calls forth
 Like powers by them undreamed of ; and all life
 Sentient, (where ends, begins it ?) with bright touch
 Illuminant, handling, shows how art confirms
 Nature in him, whose wont it is to achieve
 The impossible ; as, while all common fowl
 Once launched, must on, or drop, one is, who heir
 To powers incommunable, his wheeling flight
 At will halts ; eyes o'erhead the storm-thinned rack ;
 Beneath, the streamlet gliding ; round his feet,
 Moveless, as clamped to some invisible rock,
 Shadowy, ærial, the impertinent rout
 Of birdlings flout ; he, poised on equal wing,
 Through every plume, breath delicate and intense
 Respiring free, his place in spatial air
 Ponders at ease ; nor acts, till, self-inclined,
 He circumscribes the sphere, and coasts the skies.

Art is man's nature ; nature is God's art.
 All nature in the poet's heart is limned
 In little ; as now in landscape stones, we see
 The swell of ground, green groves, and running streams
 Fresh from the wolds of Chaos ; hints of life
 Foreworldly, pencilled by pre-solar light,
 Or paradisal sun ; so in his mind
 Ingrained in primal purity, know, life's main
 And simple elements marshalled 'neath one law,
 Harmonic and continuous ; God to know
 The heavenly glory of ; and of doing good,
 And being man ; the pride of serving truth ;
 The joy of furthering reason's Cause, and right's,
 The cause of freedom, virtue, peace ; nor these
 For mean or easeful ends alone ; but brave
 To bear, as blessed to be, he wisdom seeks,
 And sacred rites participates in, which give

To souls like-willed, the privilege he hath earned,
 And all prepared makes partners of his light.
 'Twixt priestly powers and laic stands the bard,
 A living link ; now chanting odes divine ;
 Now holy, and austere, with sacred spell
 Inviting angels ; with fine magic, fiends
 Evoking, whiles in festive guise, his brow
 With golden fillet bounden, earnest alone
 The throng to charm, that seeks, or celebrates,
 The games here, there, the mysteries of life,
 With truths ornate, and pleasure's choicest plea.

Man's minion thus and monitor, though all else
 Be mute, he, armed with the instinct both of rule
 And right, in privilege only potent, speaks
 His spirit in self-rewarding song, nor asks
 For the world's luxuries, nor gifts. So, ours
 Who, his first feat conceived in flowering youth,
 And after through all ripening lustres made,
 His life's chief business, mission, end ; with all
 Fair addings, summed ; and save with these, and just
 Re-orderings, and adornings, all time brought,
 Brooked as but aidant to his soul's intent,
 Knew, else, scant joy ; but this achieved, enough ;
 Even as the ormer, pearly ear o' the sea,
 Whose aim nor tide nor tempest shakes, but shapes ;
 Who, taught by orient suns and vesper skies,
 Where steers the crescent star her silvery ark
 O'er azure deeps, gold rippled, many a year
 Splendidly toiling, his mysterious shell,
 Born of himself, a life-long miracle, gifts
 Daily, with goodlier dyes and tenderer hues ;
 In bulk, in beauty vastening e'er ; he now
 The quivering rose-blush kindles, now the blue
 Haunts as with memory of some flame-plumed wave
 Horsing adventurously the seas by night,
 Lone, errant : or of ruddiest lightning snatched
 While diving ; now with prismy pencil fires
 Finelier the green of travelled seas surcharged
 With tropic sunsets ; now the iceberg's spell,
 Which binds the enchanted rainbow in its breast,
 Steals holily ; but chastened every gleam,
 Each soft ubiquitous flash fused flickering ; whilst
 Vanishing fixed ; till at last one master tint,
 Thinned to a thought, all hues commuting, shot
 Quick through the whole, his lonely life-work he
 Indifferently perfects ; and moon by moon,
 Known but to silence and the all-aidant God,
 Lives self-imparadised. So tasked, his time
 Our bard, like minded nature's ends, and heaven's,
 To accomplish, passed ; for man and nature each
 Give signals of perfections, not this hour
 In them inherent ; part passed, part to come ;

Blind rudiments, hap of qualities divine,
 Gone, or to be ; our poor mean force, of power
 Boundless ; our cunning and coarse art, of skill
 Heaven's plenary inbreath fills and fines ; our ends
 Finite, of his, the great first Cause, in whom
 We, as like lusted with the elements
 Fixed, and in nature born of sun and sea,
 Light's golden generation, not alone
 Patterned according to his Being show,
 But emulous of his operations, act
 To life enlightening ends, like-motived. Think !
 God worketh slowly, yea, a thousand years
 He takes to lift his hand off that he hath made,
 When seemingly most finished. Layer on layer,
 Laid as by fingers skilled in length's extremes,
 And thrilled progressive through all elements,
 He framed earth ; fashioned, balled and hardened it
 Into the great, bright, useful thing it is ;
 Water he heired with marl ; flame stilled by stone ;
 Its seas life crowded, and soul hallowed lands
 He with the sun's broad girdle that sets aglow,
 Like love's embrace, close clinging as for life,
 Earth's orbèd breast, girt ; fanned with tempests ; veiled
 With nebulous ocean clouds, now bright, now dark ;
 With virgin gold veined ; dusted thick with gems ;
 Lined it with fire ; and round its heart-fire bowed
 Rock-ribs unbreakable ; until, whole at last,
 Earth took her shining station as a star,
 In heaven's dark hall, high up the throng of worlds.

All this and thus did God. Nor meanly blame
 Man, mediator betwixt the whole and God,
 Who causes like in essence, if diverse
 In value, would collate ; nor this conceive
 Extern to that most in us, the divine
 And universal reason of things ; but own
 That even as when in summer's sultriest heats,
 At night, o'er heaven the harmless flash looms wide,
 With faint far fulminings, and we learn, all day
 We have breathed invisible lightnings, and our breasts
 Arched on unvolumed thunder ; so, once taught
 Clearly in spirit to realize our own
 Uncredited divinity, we first feel
 True consciousness of life, as filled, sphered, skied
 With Deity. Be it aye so. For aught else,
 Most rests with those who read. A work, a thought,
 Is that each makes it to himself, of great
 Dark meanings capable, rushing like the sea,
 In life-shoals measurelessly ; may be, as air
 By the wild doves' wing beclouded, while they sweep,
 Miles broad, o'er western woods, with glimpses vast
 Here, there, of firmamental light ; or, nothing ;
 Bodiless, spiritless. Be but ours conceived

With adequate force, and lo ! we add a star
 To thought's bright hemisphere. And for man's soul,
 As shown in actual, and in ultimate times
 Foreshadowable, the test of virtue tried,
 Temptation, and its workings in the heart ;
 Ambition, thirst of secret lore, joy, love ;
 Riverlike, sometimes doubling on itself ;
 Adventure ; travel heavenly, and of earth ;
 Friendship and pleasure, passion, poesie,
 Viewed ever in their spiritual end and power :
 Bliss heavenly ; evil, of God annihilate ;
 The angels lost, restored, by him all made ;
 Life pre-existent ; and like marvels, much
 Unnamed ; one visible remnant of pure faith
 The soul-incoronating, when most eclipsed ;
 Most nigh gone ; these the mainland of our orb
 Might form ; its isles, its seas. But if less vast
 Our soul-grasp, be content : the whole a fane
 Intelligible conceive spire, tower and crypt ;
 Dome, sanctuary, and shrine, the spirit which holds,
 To whom, and his by whom, it is consecrate ;
 From whose porch, now passed through, is something seen,
 As in saintly shrine by Seine's blue wave, the shell
 Colossal, from seas southern shipped, since filled
 With waters purificative, immirroring, shows,
 The main pile's pillared vast beyond of what
 At large succeeds ; the all-intempling law
 Of moral being answerable for act,
 Self-testing choice of good or ill ; faith's course,
 And scope, in chosen, and world-ensampling soul ;
 With time's distractions, with the world's deceits
 Contestant, ere yet gained celestial life.

I.

Behold us spiritwise in Heaven, unite
 In angel worship of the infinite God,
 World destinative. Evil all tempting, man
 Malign'd, God vindicates Himself, and proves
 Earth bettering through all ages; best the last,
 Ill's double attack permits, and names the strife
 Testful of evil and good that all shall close.
 The kind sweet offices hear of angel guard;
 The privileged joys of chosen souls which choose
 Themselves in God, all goodness; how perdures
 The spirit premortal, and perfectible; awed,
 The final doom of things terrestrial learn.
 Yet while from time's broad chart the accumulate dust
 Sweeping of years unnumbered, and to heaven
 Opening His boon design, God all foreshews
 Accomplished, grieves one angel still; 'tis Earth's.
 An outline this of world-life, which, begun,
 Will end, and rightly, in Heaven, and with God;
 God, too i' the midst, substantive of the whole.

HEAVEN, DEITY, THE ANGELIC HIERARCHY, BENIEL, GUARDIAN
 ANGEL, ANGEL OF EARTH, LUCIFER.

GOD. Eternity hath snowed its years upon them;
 And the white winter of their age is come,
 The world, and all its worlds; and all shall end.

SERAPHIM (*worshipping*). God! God! God!

As flames in skies we burn and rise

And lose ourselves in Thee.

Years on years, And nought appears

Save God to be.

To us no thought Hath Being brought

Toward thee that doth not move;

Years on years, And nought appears

Save God to love.

All thou dost make, Lies like a lake

Below thine infinite eye;

Years on years, And all appears

Save God to die.

CHERUBIM. As sun and star, how high or far,

Shew but a boundless sky;

So creature mind Is all confined

To shew Thee God Most High.

The sun still turns, the sun still burns

Round, round himself and round;

So creature mind To self's confined;

But thou, God! hast no bound.

Systems arise, or a world dies,

Each constant hour in air;

But creature mind, with Heaven affined,

Lives in thy love, God, there.

SER. AND CHE. (*together*). Thou fill'st our eyes, as were the skies,
 One burning boundless sun ;
 While creature mind in path confined,
 Passeth, a spot thereon.

THE ELECT SPIRITS. The voices of our brethren, cry, O Lord !
 Still 'gainst the ills, the wrongs, the cruelties,
 Peoples and kings of earth, tyrants alike
 O'er others, slaves of self, each heap on them,
 Impartial in injustice, war or peace,
 Say, rather, war exhausted, equal grief
 Brings to thy friends, thy chosen ; for whose just sake
 Earth, thou hast said, not less, alone survives.
 It may be these, full soon, shall have borne enough.

GOD. Know, all ye angels, who these heavens make glad
 In the utterance of e'erduring truth, with bliss
 Divine preharmonized ; nor yet the less
 With total Being's joys and woes ; commoved ;
 You, too, blessed spirits, on earth regenerate, here
 Before the sun, conceived, souls highest born,
 But humble each as high ; sage, simple, pure ;
 God loving, and all good ; with mine own will
 Eternal, your immortal aspirance, oned,
 Angels and saints, hear ; from the depths of space
 And out of earth's broad heart, as from all spheres,
 Now and again, the patient cry I hear
 Of mine elect beloved ; hopeful soon
 To know earth's hot probation passed ; to seek
 The great reality they so long have longed
 To embrace, of Deity ; you and them, and all
 Of every age, clime, race, faith chosen, it now
 Behoves to learn your wish, with my will summed.
 All truths your sacredest traditions teach
 On the end of worlds, are trembling to be born.
 Conceived, once dubious ; now in perfect stage
 For ever crystallised ; not as natural things,
 Which, consummate, decline to their last pitch ;
 But once evolved for ever perfected.
 What prophecy inspired and science sage,
 Predictive from passed record of lost lights
 Æthereal, hath, oracular, tongued, henceforth,
 On earth, hastes to fulfilment. Faith's long roll
 Of numbered spirits, but one of perfect lacks ;
 Lacks but the seal now fixed of breathful life ;
 Life natural ; end and ebb of Being's tide ;
 Foremost of all, earth's end.

ANGELS.

Earth's end is sealed.

ANGEL OF EARTH. I, Lord, who with the luminous seven which
 lamp

Thy sun-throne, and with light thence filled, had heard
 Some flying fame of swiftly destined close
 Common to every orb ; and seeing that mine
 Had barely touched the verge of betterness,

Though ready, ripe in sooth, for happier things,
 Long hoped for by its best and worthiest ; both
 That threatened doom, but dubiously, meseemed,
 Preached, to believe ; and which if true or else,
 To learn, me hither brings, learn now, alas !
 Too true, the fateful fact.

GOD. Perfection reached,
 In spiritual things, lives self-perpetuate, aye ;
 In mortal or dissoluble things, in states
 Of social growth, or race-wise, rests not long ;
 But fleetly runs, or suddenly, to fall,
 Even as yon great galactic ring mid space,
 Turns and returns, succedent to itself,
 Till all succumb, world after world, to fate.

ANGEL OF EARTH. To hear this and to bear, yet know all doom
 Proves just, is mine ordeal. But what is this ?
 I hear the beat of a strange, strong wing in heaven ;
 Irregulate, wild. It makes towards the throne.
 It is the Spirit of Evil. Woe is me !
 Woe to the earth ; to man. What seeks he here ?

LUCIFER. Ye thrones of Heaven, how bright ye are, how pure !
 How have ye brightened since I saw ye first !
 How have I darkened since ye saw me last !
 What 'vails Hell's murky abyss of fire, that cave
 Loathsome of falsest oracles, where Ill's host
 Endure, inflict, or plot perdition ; what
 Air's ravenous heights I reign over and roam
 Wreckful, tempestuous, with all lackeying plagues
 Vaporously impomped ; on self-wrought rack the while,
 Maddening me, 'gainst these seats serene, on good
 Eternal based ; with the incense canopied o'er
 Of universal worship, echoing, round
 Heaven's templ'd dome, God's sun-words, great with life ?
 Yet must I work through world and life my fate ;
 And winding through the wards of human hearts,
 Steal their incarnate strength. Death doth his work
 In secret and in joy intense, untold :
 As though an earth-quake smacked its mumbling lips
 O'er some thick-peopled city. But for me,
 Exists nor peace nor pleasure, even here,
 Where all beside, the very faintest thought,
 Is rapture. I will speak to God, as erst ;
 If wrong, no matter ; wrong's mine instinct now.
 But so for ever ? Shall all Ill and I
 Stand, like eternal with Him, in God's face ?
 It means not. Let my present plot proceed.
 Father of Spirits as is the sun of air,
 Who, self-sufficing, willing things to be,
 All hallowedst by thy world-effecting word ;
 As in him seen, the vast world creature, man,
 Primal humanity of the Deity self
 Unfolding, emanant first of natures pure,

As man immortal, angel spread through space ;
 As mortal, sensuous, earthy, through all spheres ;
 With whom, participant of thy spirit, the soul
 Unfallen, or soul restorable, in commune
 Joys firstly, lastly and for ever ; hear,
 God one and sole ; who, all where in thy laws,
 Almighty art in their effects ; all good
 In thy designs ; and in thyself, all wise ;
 Whose word omnific forms the way the world
 Proceeds on temporally ; and whence to thee,
 Eternal, in thee reborn, it returns ;
 Before all light's material ray ; all ray
 Extant, intelligible ; all time, change, law ;
 Thou, sole unchangeable, seest me once again ;
 Still sunlike, though eclipsed, of blinding power ;
 And fiery cause, and everness of ill ;
 Behold I bow before thee. Hear thou me.

GOD. What would'st thou Lucifer ?

LUCIFER. The world-apple
 Shows dead ripe. It wants plucking. Touch it thou,
 Or I, and lo ! the poor perfection falls.

GOD. What may to thee seem perfect, oft in heaven
 Far other sheweth.

LUCIFER. Man, through ignorance first
 And need of knowing, fell : now, grown so wise,
 He thinks he lacketh nothing ; not even God.
 Science so self-sufficient shews ; she makes
 Each day such vast advances through the world,
 Inly and outwardly, that even now she aims
 Thee to dethrone ; and, miracles all disproved,
 As fabulous breaches of eternal law,
 Not now, nor ever possible, men to teach
 Her own more marvellous mysteries, and thenceforth
 Herself e'er deify.

GOD. All things to know
 Subordinate even to law, precludes not faith
 Towards one who every law first made, first willed.

LUCIFER. Faith I have missed from earth this many an age ;
 Faith, is she here ?

GOD. Faith is both there and here ;
 Participant of divine ubiquity.

Thy knowledge is defective. Still on earth
 Are those who knowing most, the most believe.

LUCIFER. More like myself, who knowing much, most doubt.
 Lives not the soul on earth who seeks not self
 In love ; in knowledge ; most of all in power ;
 Nor would not sacrifice to self the world.
 Self is the god men worship, more than thee.

GOD. Perfected from the first by grace divine,
 The heavenborn spirit and pre-immortal, fraught
 With luminous fulness, though a moment dimmed
 By sin, not perished. knowledge conciliates

With wisdom, both with faith ; and faith is wise ;
 Or ignorant ; as may be. Were I, once more
 Future to test, as in the passed, by proof
 Of many, or one, as erst, thou would'st fail.

LUCIFER.

How, fail ?

I deemed me passably successful there,
 In Eden once ; and everywhere, since then,
 Where'er man's heart hath planned its Paradise.

GOD. To finite mind divergent from the light
 Eterne, it doubtless seems so ; but in view
 Of spirits who stand concentric with all truth,
 Howbeit of bounded gaze, like these thy peers,
 Who loved thee once, loved, monished, mourned in vain,
 Thy failure shows fore-ordered and complete.
 The imperfect needs must err, meted by scale
 Of the ungraded absolute ; but return,
 According to conviction of what's good,
 Goodwards, is alway possible, and to all.

LUCIFER. God I oppose ; must. Can opposal fail,
 If foreordained ? Then he in mine his own
 Failure appoints. Such failure seems success.
 Nought see I more. Can any further see ?
 Let me accept the test. Or blessed, or cursed,
 All seems indifferent now, with thirst of power,
 Love, lore divine and human of all time,
 Been, being or to be, nought made can quench,
 Save waters of celestial life which flow
 Vence, sunwards ever, among the sons of men
 A youth there is, I fain would have, given up
 Wholly to me.

GOD.

I know him. He is thine

To tempt. Him richen with what gifts thou wilt,
 What might, what faculty. He'll still own grace
 Not thine. Upon his soul no absolute power
 Hast thou. All souls be mine ; and mine for aye.

LUCIFER. Thanks, God ! This means still, I may so torment
 With dubiety his conscience, ruining all
 Assurance Godwards ; so with pleasures ply,
 Passions and creatural vanities, his heart
 Trained downwards, with world wisdom, and profound
 Knowledge of surfaces, so his spirit, corrupt ;
 Make proud with gifts stupendous ; with all use
 Of mundane power inordinate, and forepledge
 Of superhuman privilege taint his soul,
 That ;—be it ! I leave to thee the absolute.

GOD. And I give thee leave to this, that man may know
 My love than all his sin more ; and to himself
 While proving nought save God can satisfy
 The soul he maketh great, prove both to thee
 And to the world, faith peer of knowledge.

GUARDIAN ANGEL.

Thanks,

For this. Lord, endless thanks and ceaseless praise,

Both from the world, and me, and Angels all.
To know at hand truth's trial, trust in thee
Strengtheneth ; and proof of principle perfects
Man's noblest resolutions for his own,
Or the world's weal, here blessedly at one.

LUCIFER. Thou God art all in one. Thine infinite
Bounds being. Thou hast said the world shall end.
Wandering through space and yond purlieus of heaven,
Such words methinks, chanced I, but now, to o'erhear ;
And earth, I take it, man's peculiar plot,
'Voids not the general doom.

GOD. The earth whereon
Man lives, dies with him : Lo ! its hastening end
Hangs imminent o'er it.

LUCIFER. Due, I not deny.
The world is perfect as concerns itself,
And all its parts and ends ; not as towards thee.
So man, unlikest, likest God of all
Existence, thee resembleth as act, mind.
In him of whom I ask, I seek once more
To tempt the living world ; and then depart.

GOD. Time ceaseth. All ye thousands of the chosen,
Thousands of God, the innumerable hosts of souls
Forecalled, forecounted, since the world began,
All ages passed, your self-conditioned doom
Fulfilling, hear ye heavenly, on earth's end
And man's, my judgment. Mark this mortal soul,
Many a long lustre working out his own
Election, with success right variable
As seems ; all souls else struggling in the flesh
Alike with him, shall, by one choiceful act,
Contemporary with Nature's end, their fate
Freely decide ; and in faith's final fight,
Spiritual, sole blessed, their meet reward attain ;
Who fail, fail not to expiate pains most just,
Be sure, ere I, long suffering too, forgive.
Who rightly choose, and bravely war, make heaven ;
Bliss instant theirs, bliss ever. So shall not
Mercy tax justice with o'erjust extremes :
Nor justice mercy lawless call, e'ermore.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Oh who hath joy like mine ? joy first by me
Felt, when in dim eternity, far back,
From out thy boundless bosom, as a star
In the air, that soul was kindled, Lord ! and given
To me, through every age of world-life gone.
To guard and guide ; the while by spherul strains
Hailed, from Heaven's depths, we both at thy feet fell
In worship ; joy of joys, now, e'er assured.

LUCIFER. Vaunt not thyself, nor aught too hastily.

GUARDIAN ANGEL.

Peace !

To you, ye Saints and Angels, let me speak ;
For you I see rejoice with me, ye know

What 'tis to triumph o'er temptation ; what
 To fall before it ; how the young spirit faints ;
 The virgin tremor ; the blood's ebb and flow,
 Exagitated by heart-quakes, out of wont ;
 When first some vast temptation calmly comes,
 And states itself before the unequal soul,
 For conflict unprepared ; prepared not even
 Semblance to own of conflict ; as the sun
 Low looming in the west startles the wave
 Of whimpling brook, which yet, its waters grown
 Aortal 'mongst earth's veins, shall mainward pour
 The riverine flood ; full many a broadening league
 Of land o'ermantling. Than the Tempter's self
 Can be no greater peril. Less the shame
 Of yielding ; more the glory of conquering,
 In him this soul elect, of ill so sought,
 Expert of time's accumulated tests,
 Till now, earth given, his crowning trial comes ;
 With mine, I trust, his triumph. Know, ye Saints,
 From infancy through childhood, up to youth
 Have I this soul attended ; marked him blessed
 With all life's sweet and sacred ties ; the love
 Prayerful of parents ; pride of friends ; health, ease,
 Prosperity ; social converse with the good,
 The gifted ; and a heart all lit with love,
 Like a summer sea aflow with living light.
 Hopeful and generous and earnest ; rich
 In commerce with high spirits of all time ;
 Knowledge and truth for their own divinest selves
 Loving ; earth's deeds of glory tracking now ;
 Now conning wisdom's words, as, heaven inspired
 In bright effectual ray the mind they tinge
 Of sage, or bard ; nor he himself to strain
 Creative, serious, all inapt, nor all
 Unpredisposed ; but as some Hermit rock
 All earth's lone outguard, daily of the sea
 Takes baptism, and, in the elemental rite,
 While o'er its head the tidal function pours,
 Full-handed, gladdens ; so he in prayer and praise,
 Morning and evening constant, for good asked,
 Or blessing granted ; affluences of thought,
 Such as might string his own to noblest aims
 Of bettering man ; or kindred soul arouse
 To meet conception of supernatural things ;
 Or fancy's feats, wrought deftest ; he with Heaven
 Joyed in commune. Fraught thus with peace his days
 And studious nights star-armed, or moon crowned,
 In good, in joy, all radiantly elapsed ;
 His grateful heart opening to the Lord of Life,
 Our spiritual sun, flower-wise. All this, while long
 I marked, a slow but at length a palpable change
 His spirit eclipsed ; from what o'ershadowing sphere

Showed not to me ; and I a fall from good
Fatal and final feared.

LUCIFER. Regard me, friend ;
Deemst thou I roam the earth for nothing now ?
Thou art scarce a competent soul-guard. Pleased to see
Doubtless such rare simplicity, know thou well
It is this same candour lures us ; habits these
Which tempt the very Tempter ; tempt even me.
The expansive spirit which feels all bounds a bond,
Though of remotest space, attracts ; aught free
A natural foe that must be mediatized.

GOD. Too well divinest thou the soul's weakness. Oft
The o'er dominating spirit less prompt to learn
Self-rule, than to command another, falls
Off guard, into undreamed of pains and fines.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. An aching wish to know the world, I knew
Lorded latewhile his spirit. Ambition, love
Eldest of things, that dawn-life of the soul ;
Youth's passionate pleasures and frivolities, all
Had thrown cross-lights, and dazed his once so clear
Purview of life. Life's simpler aims lacked zest.
God's love seemed lost upon him. Oh ! he grew
Heart-deadened ; watching, warning vain, I fled
Hither, to intercede with God our Lord,
To bless him with salvation, suddenly.
Such things have been.

LUCIFER. And are not.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Plead we may
Always for those we love, by leave divine.
And now thou summ'st all bounties, Lord ! in him
Choosing as test of human faithfulness,
My ward, my charge. But thou God knowest the mould
Of mortals, and the infinite end the souls
Thou savest are all predestined to in heaven.
So be thy mercy mighty to this spirit
Fiend-threatened, nor permit him who presides
O'er hell's eternal holocaust, too far
To tempt or tamper with man's mutable heart.

GOD. My mercy doth all outstretch the universe ;
Shall it suffice not for one soul ?

LUCIFER. God's wrath
Am I to myself ; and for that wrath inheres
In evil as sin, am bound to do my part.
Angel, do thou thine. They be far enough
Asunder.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Are the heaven-strung chords of man's
Immortal spirit for thee to wreck at will ?
Bear witness all ye blessed to the word !
Angels, intelligences, the sons of God ;
Ye who know nought but truth, nought feel but love ;
Will nought but bliss, nought do save righteousness ;
Whose life was ere the heavens were yet conceived.

The stars begotten, or eldest ages born ;
 Ye first who crown all heavens ; in whose great names
 God's name is deepliest rooted, though it live
 Germwise in all these hierarchies of light,
 Or spiritual or spherul ; ye who move
 Restless amidst the peace profound of heaven,
 And watchful round the throne ; ye all who rule
 Regions, states, kingdoms, races, families, tribes,
 Times, ages, epochs, cycles ; ye who souls
 From heaven bear earthwards, and from earth, enriched
 With aspiration and good deeds, towards Heaven,
 Traverse the starry circlets of all skies ;
 Or ye whose life it is to present all souls
 Reborn to their Creator ; or through space
 Golden globed, search for junctures grace may bless ;
 Ye through whose ministry of mercy all
 His delegate spirits, now strengthening prophets, now
 The patriot 'gainst vindictive power ; the sage
 Toiling for crowds his toils who scorn which yet
 May gladden a hemisphere ; ye, who, the throne
 Sought, stirless stand round, tranced ; and on your Lord
 Gaze, and in gazing, gain divinity ; high
 Tenants, all ye, of the archetypal worlds
 From whose celestial patterns all things be,
 Become, or are created ; and you ye spirits
 Freed once on earth into Heaven's privileges,
 Yours are the multitudes of testful stars ;
 Yours, power for ever, all instructive peace,
 Yours, permanent and progressive joy, who work
 And live with God ; bear witness all, that not
 More surely bliss with godliness dwells, and ones,
 Than that, even spite of sin, man's purblind race
 Might, and they would, with you, Heaven's denizens,
 Recognize in time's scenes, though cloud-belts bar,
 In provident mystery, half its burning disk,
 The o'erruling power through miracle tempering law,
 Which by our creature purposes worketh out
 Its deeds ; and by our own deeds its purposes.

ANGELS. Devoted spirit, proceed ; bloom forth in act.
 Heaven's help, time's ripening forces are thine own ;
 Nature's best, holiest influences ; and all,
 With vast assent, confirm thy just appeal.

LUCIFER. Still, Lord, this tyrant patron. Soul to soul
 I with this mortal battle.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Be the end,
 God ! for thy glory only ; and evil's act
 Make for thy creature's good.

LUCIFER. If lightnings smite not
 Straight to its end this goodly world-frame, 'like
 In all the stars ; nor writhing nature yield,
 All severally, her elemental limbs
 To common death ; nor serpent armies, winged

To fang man's race, outnumbered, and so wreak
 Heaven's doubtless bounteous dooms, to myself I seem
 To have lost, since here, the clue of things. Meanwhile,
 The more of death-chilled venom one can pour,
 Since all things, 'tis adjudged, right soon shall cease,
 Transfusive, Lord, into blind Nature's veins
 The more mayhap, God would ; the more at least
 Seem I to anear success. When creatures stray
 Farthest from thee, then warmest towards them burns
 Thy love, even as yon sun-star hottest beams
 On earth, when distant most ; or seems.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. The earth,
 This soul indwells, this grain chose from life's sands,
 Dies with him ; fine and sum of miracles,
 That spirit the most incredulous, demon, man,
 May know, who all doth, all sustains, can all
 Unmake ; and every law, sphere-based, withdrawn,
 The whole may wholly cease.

LUCIFER. Lord, now go I
 Thy will to do, for once, which being herein
 Desirably destructive, I to aid
 Will, too. So, he I have lighted on would seem
 Of the forechosen. But will their happy fate
 All men's involve ? And if all men's, all mind's ?
 Can state of aught create immutable be,
 Even by sin ? Knew I but this, not thwart
 God's purposes would I, nor seek to wage
 War bootless with the eternal of the Heavens.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Spirit depart ; the secrets of the skies.
 God's counsels, angels proximate to the throne
 Dare but enquire, 'tis meet not thou shouldst share.

GOD. Hearing he understands not that he hears,
 Nor seeing, sees. Nought wists he perfectly
 Who loves not God.

LUCIFER. Heaven's oracles in Heaven
 Speechless, still doubt I.

GOD. Who doubts only, exists
 Vainliest. Thou, too, who watchest o'er the world,
 Whose end I fix, prepare to have it judged.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Lord ! let me not then have watched o'er it in
 vain.

From age to age I have hoped, from hour to hour
 It would better grow, grow holier ; hope so still ;
 Better it is than once ; hath knowledge more ;
 More freedom, more goodwill ; man more aspires
 To attain a high humanity now, akin
 To Heaven's divine Ideal. This orblet, Lord !
 More love I now than ever, as the seat,
 With many another star, of spiritual life,
 Whereby the eternal Reason, with all made
 Communes, as born of Deity, and all
 Makes eye this orb as altar, whence praise, prayer,

The soul's pure flame of sacrifice, to thee
 From all creation soareth. Me thou gav'st it
 As a child-ward. To me earth is as even
 To thee the boundless universe ; nay, more ;
 For thou couldst other make. It is my world.
 Take it not, Lord ; but rather let it be
 Immortal as thy love ; and altars are
 Holy ; and angel brethren, sister orbs,
 Hail it afar, so titled. Oh ! I have seen
 World questioned, comforting world, yes seen them weep
 Each other, if but for one red hour eclipsed ;
 Or, as when, but now, Jove's giant orb, obscured
 By blood-wet clouds, dread proof of deadly strife
 In his breast, disruptive, if subdued ; unmoved
 His sun-sired kin look on him, and pass by ;
 Earth only pitiful of the idol sphere,
 Sore struggling with his foes, herself unfree
 From violent ill-wishers, waves many a mist,
 Anxious upon her mountain crests, in sign
 Of astral sympathy ; so warmly true
 To nature's touch the star-grain of her mould ;
 Earth of all worlds most generous ; of all stars
 Earth, fairest, tenderest.

LUCIFER. Know'st thou not, or bound
 Hast been for aye to thy false, thy faithless world,
 As foolish, too, as false, nor yet divined,
 How hard it proves to fight 'gainst fate ?

ANGEL OF EARTH. I know
 Fate is God's word ; his mediatorial means
 Spheres, angels, men ; his act the infinite whole ;
 Nor fear thee, and thy forces aught.

BENIEL. Leave thou
 All gainsaying to the accusant spirit, and know
 Divine Humanity 'twixt the world and God
 Of intermediate essence, in all orbs
 Implanted by the maker, for his joy,
 Their good ; pretemporal, only not eterne,
 Is subjected to evil in time ; bears pain,
 Grief, changefulness ; and so by commune shares
 The weakness of all worlds it dwells within,
 Angelic, not than human less ; partakes,
 Brother and friend of spirit everywhere
 The sorrows of the world God made, God loved.

GOD. A truth thou, Beniel, chief of all heaven's hosts
 Loyal, star-bright, all sons, with thee, of God,
 All angels, still imperfect, suffering thence
 Ill, and succumbing to the Tempter ; choice
 Blinded by motives meaner than the highest ;
 Not than man less, canst prove ; and late returned
 Hither, from such high service, knowest full well
 A world destroyed means oft a world renewed
 In holier beauty ; and each act divine

Revised perfective, broader deeps of love.

LUCIFER. I, too, doubt not, could tell thee much beside;
Angel of earth, behoves thee lay to heart,
Feared I not greatlier some might learn too much
For their soul's peace.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Hence! Me thou daunt'st no more.

BENIEL. Star unto star, upon its pilgrim course
Speaks light authentic or reflective; world
To world recognizant of its source, its end
Achieved, foreshows; and grateful to its Lord,
Implores the password of the great return
Of Being create, made pure, to God, whose name
In us, or with us shared, the word imparts
To Deity re-unitive, worth all tongues
In earth or heaven. In neither, other name
Than this avails; the sire's, who all that is
Hath made so sweetly reasonable, that soul,
By love enlightened, eying God's intent
Expanded through all Nature, and itself,
Must coincide with heaven; and to heaven's ends,
By voluntary contract impledged, and force
Of ever aspiring purity, adheres
Self-consecrate, God-hallowed. Every orb,
Nay, every soul its wilful act abides
As angel-world hath late due witness borne,
Thou sole, in making and unmaking worlds.
Canst rule, Lord! or preserve to highest ends
By precreative right all life; but makest
For us and our behalf, in teaching worlds,
Worlds rectifying, judging, saving worlds, consist
Thine everlasting Being. One world frame tread
In other's footsteps; each, by limited mind,
Eternal thought, to thee, O infinite One,
Changeless, a pause progressive.

LUCIFER. Earth he next
Will judge; for so saith God.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Be it not, Lord!
Thou art all love, all goodness. He, the foe,
The evil of the universe, loves not earth,
Nor, man, thy son, nor thee.

LUCIFER. Love I not earth,
Fair earth, well zoned?

ANGEL OF EARTH. Thou knowest best the allwise.

LUCIFER. Behold now, all you worlds! The space each fills
Shall be right soon its successor. Accept
The trivial consolation.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Earth! oh earth!

LUCIFER. It is earth shall head destruction. She shall end,
The worlds shall wonder why she comes no more
On her accustomed orbit; and the sun
Miss one of his Apostle lights; the moon,
An orphaned orb, shall seek for earth for aye,

Through time's untrodden depths, and find her not,
 No more shall morn, out of the holy east
 Stream o'er the amber air her level light ;
 Nor evening, with the spectral fingers, draw
 Her star-sprent curtain round the head of earth.
 Her footsteps never thence again shall grace
 Heavens blue, sublime. Her grave, Death's now at work,
 Gaps deep in space. See, tombwards gathering, all
 Her kindred stars in long process, night-clad ;
 Each lights his funeral brand, and ranks him round.
 And one by one, shall all your wandering worlds,
 Whether in orb'd path they roll, or trail
 Gold-tressed, in length inestimable of light,
 Their train, returnless from extreme space, cease ;
 The sun, bright keystone of Heaven's world-built arch
 Be left in burning solitude ; the stars
 As dewdrops countless on the ætherial fields
 Of the skies, and all they comprehend shall pass ;
 The spirits of all worlds shall all depart
 To their great destinies ; and thou and I,
 Greater in grief than worlds, shall live, as now.

BENIEL. But shall it be as now like-mine ~~and~~, say ?

LUCIFER. Thou'dst know how far I can the coming sound.
 This learn at least ; and 'mongst thy chiefest things
 Not yet achieved, account ; that could even Power
 All ill annul, it would not, nor would glad
 Made mind with the announcement. It is more
 To strive 'gainst some things than all else possess.
 Nor yet the issue is complete that ill
 Were better not to have been. Is good made worse
 By evil's being ? Is it I disfavour thee ?
 Or shinest not clearer thou on my black ground ?

BENIEL. Time yet may be, O fallen ! when Satael, thou,
 And all thy peers conjured 'gainst heavenly good,
 True, thou art more of evil than all they,
 May cease from act ; no longer to infect
 With deathful respiration the sweet air,
 Vital and virtuous, of the all-bettering world ;
 But seeking light, health find.

LUCIFER. It may be so ;
 Time was, time is ; it seems not like to be ;
 Or I could scarce myself identify.

BENIEL. Likelier it shows some, from age to age.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Thou ~~find~~, canst know not the to come.

LUCIFER.

It is safe

For all that, to predict woe. Woe impends
 Always.

BENIEL. In hell's dark future that is writ
 Shall amaze man yet, fiend, angel.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Spirit, hear ;
 All heavens at thee shall peer.

LUCIFER.

There, to thy earth.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Think not thy ways so secret, nor thy craft
 So inconceivable ; but thou art tracked. I know
 Where a blind world dislumined late of God,
 Smote into blackness thrice of darkness, such
 As spreads where light, God's shadow, is not ; by storms
 Of stars meteoric wrecked ; of ruins built
 From depths of ruined systems ; by base force
 Invert of dissolute elements dragged to the verge
 Of chaos, rolling round space utmost, lies.
 There, the outcast of all Being, orderless,
 Good only lacking from all rudiments ;
 Reigns ruin permanently ; disaster sows,
 Decay reaps ; naught aught fits ; that, fit for thee,
 Be thy world. Leave, leave me the lifeful earth ;
 Green, fertile, flowery, fruitsome, full of men ;
 Its orderly elements graduated ; its wants
 Prelusive of perfections yet to be ;
 Home-shrine of every virtue, every law
 Spatial or spiritual, God hath given the world.
 Stretch forth thy shining shield, O God ! the heavens,
 Over the prostrate earth, an armed friend,
 And save her from the swift and violent hell
 Her beauty hath enchanted ; from the woe
 Of love like his, oh ! save her though by death.

LUCIFER. Go, tell the earth I come.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Tidings of ill
 Announce thyself, be thine own fiendspel, thou.

GOD. Who of all here, ye sons of God, empowered
 By my sole will, and missioned to fulfil
 My word, will range him 'gainst this wily force
 Nor dread, Heaven's fixed executant, his arms,
 Or of sheer might, or craft ?

SONS OF GOD. That, Lord, our chief,
 Our prince, will.

BENIEL. Of such task if worthy deemed ;
 The more, as of our order, some, ere earth
 Flood covered, like a coffin 'neath its pall
 Of waters, not a little, by their fault
 Helped man to that dire ruin.

GOD. So let it be.
 Take, Kosmiel, thou his seat, when Beniel serves
 Elsewhere, Heaven's purpose ; be it an age or hour.

KOSMIEL. Joyed in the world's great order to await
 Thy ripening plans, while soul create, and soul
 Self-expiative with judgment, or redeemed
 Work out good's happy course, from first designed,
 It is either's bliss to aid, Lord ! thine intents.

BENIEL. O'er all things are eternity and change,
 And special predilection of our God,
 Particular functions of set soul to achieve.
 Thou, Lord ! who souls creat'st as the sun clouds
 From the sea of spirit, sire thou of man thy son's

Spiritual and bodily essence, both, in whom
 God's holy spirit imbreathed sonship conferred,
 Equal with ours ; made mediative ; and since,
 Now, and in all worlds, his creator's laws,
 And privilege of free choice enjoying, pays
 Justly, free spirit's contingent fines ; to know,
 And feel the scope and pride of noblest powers,
 Yet court full oft the grossest meanest proof
 Of ignorance, imperfection and all sins
 Such weakness leads to, and the original lack
 Of Being's highest qualities, yet in all
 Is heir of God and Nature ; and in Thee
 Attempering Deity with humanity, law
 With mercy's equity, as these sainted, shew,
 Live ever, and Heaven's most pure equality claim,
 With angelhood divine, each thrice made pure ;
 And you, blessed saints, regenerate, now from taint
 Of choice too oft deflectible, freed ; and whom
 God, self-exempted arbitrarily from law,
 Himself to prove supreme o'er all he had made,
 Lawed, willed, first chose ; and you, thronged countless, last
 To be in the infinite proof of spiritual life's
 Probational advance all time ; for whom
 All Heaven the fulness of its bliss reserves ;
 Creator and created, witness both
 How even if earth and every orb fire-fraught,
 Of space, enkindled luminously, should cease ;
 Perish materially ; while spirit create
 Imperfect, and so fallible, lasteth, fall
 Always maybe ; and strife twixt ill and good
 Will be ; 'gainst thee Creation's evil, prince
 Of the world, usurpative oft of seat not thine,
 In all spheres ; be it mine, at God's behest,
 These universal heavens concurrence, add
 Mine own soul's call, to strive, for aye ; and though
 Nor I, nor Nature, neither, wholly void
 Of the holy gift prophetic, wist the end
 Of Being, yet fear not I for good's success
 Final ; or in the skies ; or earth's broad field ;
 Or in these lists delimited of one soul.

GOD. Earth when her Sabbath ends, in the high close
 Of order, shall not be.

LUCIFER. Now, Heaven, farewell.
 Hell is more bearable than nothingness.

Too terrible that. To soul which sees one end
 Only, destruction, it is enough to have 'scaped
 Even as I have. To earth and action, now.
 Outfly me an' thou canst, old Time, I am gone.

GOD. Destruction and Salvation are two hands
 Upon Being's face. When both unite at close
 Of time's course hourful, death's dark day begins,
 Dawns, noons unseen. Each orb to its forefixed end

Exists ; and earth my creature, pre-elect
 Of worlds, ere all death-stricken, but passed through fire
 Renewed, made pure past primal innocence,
 Is saved. The world shall perish like a worm
 Upon destruction's path ; the universe
 Evanesce as a ghost that scents the sun ;
 Yea like a doubt before God's truth ; yet nought
 More than death then shall perish ; for then dawns
 The Sabbath of Salvation, ne'er to end.
 Joy, then, ye souls of God regenerated,
 Ye indwellers divine of Deity, know
 In Him ye are immortal as himself.

ANGELS. So shall the All in all be All in one.

GOD. Know, angel-guard, thy charge, from first ordained
 To prove his faith in God, that widening fields
 Of blessed Salvation, which is God to know
 And his will do, shall with time's broadening bounds
 Of knowledge equalled, match ; and both be reaped.
 Together. Be heaven's secret, this, reserved
 Even from himself, he of man's race the last.
 And lo ! I hallow him to the ends of heaven,
 That though he plunge his soul in sin, like a sword
 In water, it shall no wise cling to him
 For ever, Ill so holds not to aught made
 Of love divine ; but reason of being shews
 Subservient to the loftier brighter life,
 Souls are of God, All ends are known in Heaven
 Ere aimed at upon earth. The child is chosen.

SAINTS. Another soul the all-holy one

Hath chosen out of perishing earth :

And when is done the life begun,

Throughout the whole shall Heaven see none

More joyful of the immortal birth.

GOD. Let now you erring spirit, in act as doom
 Precipitate, there by angel eyeable, scarce,
 So swiftilier than the wind hath he downsped,
 By me e'er seen through ; who deformity being
 Good distort ; every fount of life, with death
 Embittereth ; taints each separate birth with sin ;
 And the soul world fouls with self ; so prompt to aid
 Creation's foes, destruction, death ; his worst
 Dare ; yet shall God, before even thought create,
 Shew just ; and sin's sire, false and faithless, learn
 Soul progress due to strife against his strife ;
 Contentment 'gainst himself, good's second source ;
 He, too, of men the tested soul and chosen,
 Chosen from first, to the last tested ; soul
 In faith unfaltering as the pole-star, fixed
 Emblem to earth of this Heaven's restful throne
 Of light, immutable, shall God confess.

BENIEL. Father of men and angels, Sons of God
 Both, by thy holy spirit so named, thy will

Accomplisheth itself. Be it ours to adore.

THRONES. Thou God, art Lord of Being ; and thy just thoughts
Are high above the star-dust of the world ;
The spheres themselves are but as glittering noughts
Upon these imperial robes, thy skies, impearled.
Life's countless thrones, yon orbs, 'mid spaces infinite
Beam joyous 'neath love's universal sight ;
We, who Thine ordered Thearchy divine
Set forth, who with thy glow effluxive shine,
We, angel raylets gladden in thine interior light.

DOMINATIONS. Between creation and destruction, now
The lull of creatural action intervenes ;
God rests ; and the world is working out its week.
His hand is in his bosom, and at peace.
But what was gradually create, shall be
Most suddenly unmade ; that arm which now
Slumbers upon his breast, shall yet wave forth ;
And from the lightning pathway of his feet,
The æthereal web world-studded of the skies,
Like to the gossamer woof, beaded with dew,
Stretched o'er the morning traveller's walk, shall pass,
Annihilate, and for ever. For, behold !
His oath uncancellable on heaven's altar rests ;
The whole shall end. All matter, erst conceived
Of God the Eternal and the Virgin void.
The firmament of material worlds shall cease ;
By spheres, may be, replaced of spiritual light ;
But Thee, who holds't in thine all-moulding hand
The infinite as a ball, all worlds, or gross
With elements, or to spirit refined, shall serve ;
Yea, o'er the universe aye omnipotent, thou
As over meanest atomie reignest Lord.

POWERS. Thy might, God, self-creative is, thy works
Immortal, temporal or destructible, all
Ever in thy sight are blessed there. The heavens,
Thy bosom, o'er all existence stoops thine eye ;
The worlds thy shining footprints shew in space.

PRINCEDOMS. Eternal Lord ; thy strength compels the worlds.
And bows the heads of ages ; at thy voice
Their insubstantial essence wears away.

VIRTUES. All-favouring God, we glory but in Thee,
Ye heavens, exalt, expand yourselves. They come,
The infinite generations, all divine.
Of Deity come, our brethren, come our friends.

ARCHANGELS. Thou who hast thousand names, as night hath stars,
Which light thee up to mind finite, yet scarce
Thy limitlessness illume, nor that abyss
Of Being, wherein thy wondrous attributes
Themselves constellate, Lord ! thy light, the light
We dwell in, shall at last, all times consumed,
Fulfil the universe, and all be bliss

ANGELS. Thee, God of Heaven, of all, we praise ;
 Through our ne'er sunseting days,
 And thy just ways, divine ;
 In thine hand is every spirit ;
 Cleansing pain and meed of merit ;
 All things souls and worlds inherit,
 Of thee all born, are thine.
 Not unto creatures is it given
 To scan the purposes of Heaven,
 Always just and kind ;
 But before thy holy breath,
 All quickening where it operateth,
 Life and spirit, dust and death,
 The boundless all is driven,
 As clouds by wind.

SAINTS. Thousands of Angels, Lord, around thee stand,
 Thousands of worlds ; all counted without pause,
 Or end : each joys, his quest at thy command
 Fulfilling, true to thy soul-quickening laws.
 So place us, God, where all may serve thy will
 Beneficent ; and free reason guide us still.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Woe, woe at last in Heaven ;
 Earth to death is given.
 The ends of things hang still
 Over them as a sky.
 Do what, do how we will,
 All's for Eternity.

SAINTS. Reject not, Lord ! thine angel's innocent prayer ;
 Her golden charity, without all alloy ;
 Look on her drooping wing, her troubled air ;
 Pity her hopeless plaint, her lost employ,

GOD. Fate, learn to reconcile thyself with joy.
 Earth's angel-warden, lift thine head. Thy prayers,
 Ungranted wholly, graceless fall not yet
 Back to their generous source. Thy love-task once
 Achieved, to guide that sphere's tempestuous life
 Through all vicissitudes, this reward be thine ;
 Thy ultimate hopes to know made truths ; its mien
 Of beauty purified, she shall be known 'mong stars,
 By the name of Peace ; true end to godly strife
 'Gainst evil, of good ; which heaven with joy shall fill ;
 And calm delights inviolable of love,
 Eternal, spiritual ; love divine of God.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Accessible, Lord ! as air to drops of dew
 That blend them in the blue serene of even,
 We, in thy peace approach thee, and, submiss,
 Thy will would seek.

GOD. Thy charge for a time resigned,
 Warn thou, and take thy leave. He shall not faint.
 Strengthen him will I, as with a belt of stars.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. But when he needs me most !

GOD. It is as I will,

I am the Guardian Angel of the world
Of spirits not less than spheres.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Lord of all Being,
Be it as thou wilt ; thy might, will, way, are one.

II.

From Heaven soul-like to earth. It is sundown ; type
Of the approaching end of earth's day. Mark
The heart's state, empty and collapsed the world's
Vain pleasures leave us in, if penitent not
For wasted gifts and hours dissatisfied,
Distraught. The Power, all ill, his lures deploys.
Youth's natural fitful, unavailing struggle
Note, 'gainst temptation come unlooked for ; power,
Love, knowledge ; who shall slight the three convened,
Like the Idæan goddesses of old ;
Nor yet as these, competitive, but combined ?
To know the future of man's race ; the soul's
Passed, individually ; to be beloved
By the world's paramount beauty, and sit earth's throne ?
Reft of heaven's generous help, how soon we fail !
Know yet, to sin is to curse God, in deed.
The soul long used to truth still keeps its strength
Though plunged upon a sudden 'mid the false,
As hands thrust into a dark room retain
Their sun-lent light, a season. So now here.
The scene of indecision, and of self
Forgetfulness breaks off, not ends.

*Wood and Water—Park—Mansion in Distance—Lawn—Flower-
garden bordering a lakelet—Sunset.*

LUCIFER, FESTUS, GUARDIAN ANGEL.

LUCIFER. Time was, I said above there, time may be,
Even for me, though he flies me pretty close.
The threat to undo this fine old time-piece chills
One's blood. Besides, the key once lost might not
Be again found. Meanwhile, the whole begins
To cease : the great phenomenon disappears.
No time was lost at the beginning, true.
Though it takes one back a crowd of years to think
Of our first conscious day dawn. After all,
One's not so old but we may like one last
Adventure in the Fair, this show of shows.
The scenery round recalls, to pensive mind,
Faintly, a rather vivid passed, wherein
Some good beginnings came to a speedy end ;
And endings now are just beginning. Still,
It is something to have 'scaped a long-feared end.
Fore Heaven ! I had rather do my worst and live,
Than do my best, and die. I and my task
Seem both at least permissible. So, to act.

The spot is chosen for me, here it is
 I make the experiment ; and here, relieved
 For good, I trust, of angel watch and ward,
 The man sought, he whose desultory step
 Rustling 'mong fallen leaves I hear. He speaks.
 I thought 'twas only serpents like myself,
 Born double-tongued, addressed their proper ears,
 For lack of livelier audience. One must hearken.
 I make myself for the nonce invisible ;
 A precious privilege that, shared with most ghosts,
 And spectres of much eminence. So ; I listen !

FESTUS (*advancing*). This is to be a mortal, and immortal,
 To live within a death-bound circle, and be
 That dark point where the shades of all things round
 Meet, mix, and deepen. Somewhere's truth light. Where ?
 Oh ! I feel like to a seed in the cold earth,
 Quickening at heart, and pining for the air.
 Passion is destiny ; the heart is its own fate.
 It is well youth's gold rubs off so soon ; for soon
 The heart gets dizzyed with its drunken dance ;
 And life's voluptuous vanities enchain,
 Enchant, and cheat no more. That spirit's on edge,
 Which nought enjoys sin's honeyed sting not taints ;
 That soothing fret which makes the young untried,
 Unwise, unwarned, swift to forestal its dues,
 Longing to be beforehand with their nature,
 In dreams and liveness cry they die to live ;
 That wanton whetting of the soul, which while
 It gives a finer, keener edge for pleasure,
 Wastes more, and dulls the sooner. Rouse thee, heart.
 Bow of my life, thou yet art full of spring.
 My quiver still hath many a purpose. Yet
 Of all life's aims what's worth the thought we waste on't ?
 How mean, how miserable seems every care ;
 How doubtful, too, the system of the mind.
 And then, the ceaseless, changeless, hopeless round
 Of weariness and heartlessness and woe ;
 And vice and vanity. Yet these make life ;
 The life at least I witness, if not feel.
 No matter, we are immortal. How I wish
 I could love men ; for still, mid all life's quests
 There seems but worthy one ; to do men good.
 It matters not how long we live, but how.
 For as the parts of one manhood, while here,
 We live in every age ; we think, and feel,
 And feed upon the coming and the gone
 As much as on the now time. Man is one ;
 And he hath one great heart. It is thus we feel
 With a gigantic throb athwart the sea
 Each other's rights and wrongs. Thus are we men.
 Let us think less of men ; man fills not half
 The measure of man's mind ; and more of God,

Sometimes the thought comes swiftening over us,
 Like a stray birdlet winging the still blue air;
 Again it rises slow, like a cloud which scales
 Breathless the skies; and just overhead upon us
 Down plunges; we, with excess of witness stunned.
 Sometimes we feel the wish across the mind
 Rush, like a rocket tearing up the sky
 That we should join with God, and give the world
 The slip; but while we wish, the world turns round,
 And peeps us in the face; the wanton world;
 We feel it gently pressing down our arm,
 The arm we had raised to do for truth such wonders;
 We feel it softly bearing on our side;
 We feel it touch and thrill us through the body;
 And we are fools; and there's an end of us.
 'Tis a fine thought that sometime end we must.
 There sets the sun of suns; dies in all fire,
 Like Asshur's death-great monarch. God of might!
 It is power we love, and live on. Spirit's end,
 And reason of being, seems somewhat, if 'tis this.
 Mind must subdue. To conquer is its life.
 Why madest thou not one spirit, like the sun,
 To king the world? And oh might mine have been
 That sun-mind, how would I have warmed the world
 To love and worship and bright life!

LUCIFER (*suddenly appearing*). Not thou.
 Hadst thou more power—put case thou hadst thy wish,
 It is vastly feasible—more wouldst thou misuse.
 But other matters first.

FESTUS. Who art thou, pray?
 It seems, as thou hadst grown out of the air.

LUCIFER. Thou knowest me well. If stranger to thine eye
 I am not to thy heart.

FESTUS. I know thee not.

LUCIFER. Come nearer. Look on me. I am above thee,
 Beneath thee, and around thee, and before thee.

FESTUS. Why, art thou all things, or dost go through all
 A spirit? or an embodied blast of air?
 I feel thou art a spirit.

LUCIFER. Yea, I am;
 The creditable presentment of a man,
 I flatter myself I may be too.

FESTUS. Thou art spirit.
 I knew it. I am glad, yet tremble, too.

What hours, what years, say, have I longed for this,
 And hoped that thought or prayer of force might win;
 How oft besought the stars, with tears, to send
 A power to me, and have set the clouds until
 I deemed I saw one coming; but ah, too soon.
 The shadowy giant alway thinned away,
 And I was fated unimmortalised;

Unscathed with the sway I would o'er souls,
What shall I do? Oh let me kneel to thee!

LUCIFER. Nay, rise; and I'll not say, for thine own sake,
That thou dost pray in private to the Devil.

FESTUS. Father of lies, thou liest.

LUCIFER. I am he.

It is enough to make the Devil merry,
To think that men deeming me dungeoned fast
Ever in hell, call on me momentarily;
Swearers and swaggerers jeer at my name;
And oft indeed it is a special jest
With witling gallants. Let me once appear,
Woe's me! they faint and shudder, pale and pray:
The burning oath which quivered on the lip
Starts back, and sears and blisters up the tongue;
Confusion ransacks the abandoned heart;
Quells the bold blood; and o'er the vaulted brow
Slips the white woman hand. To judgment, ho!
The very pivot of the earth seems snapped;
And down they drop like ruins, (even as drop,
In days of national ire, once sacred shrines,
Scenes of rank jugglery; here a pillar falls
To its fluted knee; a pediment there, that once
O'er-browed the state; and there, some delicate arch,
Whose marble arms as petrified in prayer
Long drew Heaven's pitying glance, now rude earth's prey,
Ruinous, dishallowed lies; so these, so thou
By anarchy fears prostrated,) to repent.
Such be the bravery of mighty man!

FESTUS. I must be mad; or mine eye cheats my brain,
And this strange phantom comes from overthought,
Like the white lightning from a day too hot.
It must be so. But I will pass it.

LUCIFER. Stay!

FESTUS. O save me, God! He is reality.

LUCIFER. And now thou kneel'st to Heaven. Fye, graceless boy!
Mocking thy Maker with a cast-off prayer;
For had not I the first fruits of thy faith?

FESTUS. Tempter, away! From all the crowds of life
Why single me? Why score the young green bole
For felling? Go! Am I, the youngest, worst?
No. Light the fires of hell with other souls;
Mine shall not burn with thee.

LUCIFER. Thou judgest harshly.
Can I not touch thee without slaying thee?

FESTUS. Why here? What wouldst with me?

LUCIFER. 'Fore all I'd have
Looks and words gentle.

FESTUS. Go!

LUCIFER. I cannot yet.
But why so sad? Wilt kneel to me again?
This leafy closet is most apt for prayer.

FESTUS. Yes, I will pray for thee and for myself.

LUCIFER. Waste not thy prayers : I scatter them ; they rise
No farther than thy breath ; a yard or so.

And as for me, I heed them, need them, not.
My nature God knows, and hath fixed ; and he
Recks little of the manners of the world ;
Wicked he holdeth it, and unrepentant.

FESTUS. Therefore the more some ought to pray.

LUCIFER.

To blow

A kiss, a bubble, a prayer, hath like effect
And satisfaction.

FESTUS. Let me hence ; or thou,
Go tell thy blasphemies and lies elsewhere.
Thou scatter prayer ! Make me thy minister
One moment, God, that I may rid the world
For ever of its evil. Oh, Thine arm.

LUCIFER. Canst rid thyself ?

FESTUS. Alas, no. Get thee gone.
Can naught insult thee, nor provoke thy flight ?

LUCIFER. I laugh alike at ruin and redemption ;
I am the one which knows nor hope nor fear ;
Which ne'er knew good, nor e'er can know the worst.
What thinkest thou now can anger me, or harm ?

FESTUS. Wherefore didst thou quit hell ? to drag me thither ?

LUCIFER. Thou wilt not guess mine errand. Deemest thou
aught

Which God hath made all evil ? Me he made.
Oft I do good ; and thee to serve I come.

FESTUS. Did I not hear thee boast with thy last breath
Not to have known what good was ?

LUCIFER. From myself

I know it not ; yet God's will I must work.
I come, I say, to serve thee.

FESTUS. Well, I would
Thou never hadst come ; but speak thy purpose straight.

LUCIFER. I heard thy prayer at sunset, scarce yet passed,
Where still yon dim and filmy cloudlet, drooped
Like to God's eyelid, thinned with unshed tears
Of watching, over a worthless, faithless world,
Screens the orb, now vanished. I was there ; was here.
I saw thy secret longings, unsaid thoughts,
Which prey on the breast like night-fires on a heath.
I know thy heart by heart. I read the tongue,
When still astutely, as well as when it moves.
And thou didst pray to God. Did he attend ?
Or turn his eye from the great glass of things,
Wherein he worshippeth eternally
Himself, to thee one moment ? He did not.
I tell thee naught he cares for men. I came.
And come to proffer thee the earth ; to set thee
Upon a throne, the throne of will unbound ;
To crown thy life with liberty and joy ;

And make thee free and mighty, even as I am.

FESTUS. I would not be as thou art for hell's throne,
Great fiend ; add earth's.

LUCIFER. I knew thy proud high heart,
To test its worth and mark I deemed it brave,
In shape and being thus myself I came ;
Not in disguise of opportunity ;
Not as some silly toy, which serves for most ;
Not in the masque of lucre, lust nor power ;
Not in a goblin size, nor cherub form ;
But as the soul of hell and evil came I,
With leave to give the kingdom of the world
The freedom of thyself.

FESTUS. Good ! Prove thy powers.

LUCIFER. Do I not prove them ? Who but I that hold
Immortal might o'er mine own mind, and o'er
All hearts and spirits of the living world,
Would share it with another, or forego
One hour the great enjoyment of the whole ?
And who but I give men what each best loves ?

FESTUS. Open the heavens, and let me look on God ;
Open my heart, and let me see myself,
Then, I'll believe thee.

LUCIFER. Thou shalt not believe
For that I give thee ; but for that I am.
Believe me first ; then will I prove myself.
Though sick I know thee of the joys of sense,
Yet those thou lovest most I will make pure,
And render worthy of thy love ; unfilm them,
That so thou mayst not dally with the blind.
Thou shalt possess them to their very souls ;
Pleasure and love and unimagined beauty ;
All, all that be delicious, brilliant, great
Of worldly things are mine, and mine to give.

FESTUS. What can be counted pleasure after love ?
Like the young lion which hath once lapped blood,
The heart can ne'er be coaxed back to aught else.

LUCIFER. As yet, methinks, love hath but made thee,—else
Why now sad !—wretched ? But if I for thee
Sublime it to all bliss——

FESTUS. Hold, loveless spirit ;
It is not bliss I seek. I care not for it.
I am above the low delights of life.
The life I live is in a cold dark cavern
Where I wander up and down, feeling for something
Which is to be, and must be ; what, I know not ;
But some event, incarnate destiny,
Is nigh.

LUCIFER. It is that I put before thee now,
To choose. Confess thy fate, which weighs upon thee,
Necessity, like to the world on Atlas' neck,
Sits on humanity. It is this, nought more ;

And the sultry sense of overdrawn life.

FESTUS. True.

The worm of the world hath eaten out mine heart.

LUCIFER. I will renew it in thee. It shall be

The bosom favourite of every beauty,

Even like a rosebud. Thou shalt render happy,

By naming who may love thee. Come with me.

FESTUS. Power spiritual forbidden, nor lowlier quest

Me suiting soon, as sweep o'er grain-fraught fields

Sea-bordering, deathful sands, so waste of life,

My spirit deformed, until,—and I was glad,

My heart spake in me suddenly, and said

Come, let us worship beauty; and I bowed;

And went about to find a shrine; but found

None that my soul when seeing said to, enough.

Many I met with where I put up prayers,

And had them more than answered; some, where love

Filled the whole place as 'twere oppressed with heaven.

And I worshipped partly because others did,

Partly because I could not help. But none

Of these to me assigned, away I went

Champing and choking in proud cherished pain;

And a burning wrath that not a sea could slake.

So I betook me to the all-sounding sea

And mocked its bitterness; and said unwise,

Mine heart had more of it than his; whereby.

In slumberous mutterings I o'erheard, it moaned

Of a revenge to come, which me well nigh

Life-reckless, gladdened, savage as the sea.

At last, came love; not whence I sought, nor thought it,

Nor hoped. But I grew friendly with the main.

I had only one thing to behold, the sea;

I had only one thing to believe; I loved:

Until that lonesome sameliness of thought

To the eye of mind grown all absorbing, grew

Like darkly beautiful as death, when some

Bright soul regains its star-home; or as heaven

Just when the stars falter forth, one by one,

Like the first words of love from a maiden's lips.

There are points from which we can command our life;

When the soul sweeps the future like a glass;

And coming things, full freighted with our fate,

Put out dark on the offing of the mind.

Let them come: many will go down in sight;

In the billow's joyous dash of death go down.

And we foresee the crash, the wreck; nor yield

One point to fate, as though self-sworn to doom.

On came the living vessel of all love;

Terrible in its beauty as a serpent;

Rode down upon me, like a ship full sailed,

And bearing me before it, kept me up

Spite of the drowning speed we drave at.

LUCIFER.

Much

It was like Death's craft.

FESTUS.

It was Love's.

LUCIFER.

It may be. How

Is't likely I can tell, who am scantwise skilled

In allegories, nor am as yet in love.

But oft times I have heard mine angels call

On their lost loves and amiablest compeers

In Heaven ; and, as I suffer, seen them come ;

Seen starlike faces peep between the clouds,

And hell become a tolerable torment.

Some souls lose all things but the love of beauty ;

And by that love they are redeemable ;

For in love and beauty they acknowledge good

And good is God, the great Necessity.

FESTUS. Whoso would reconcile Time's claim and Fate's,

Is coheir with unwisdom in all ends

Of disappointment and defeat. The fair

Who thrall'd me held me by more potent charms

Than wiles could feign, or spells could implicate.

I loved her for that she was beautiful,

And that to me she seemed to be all nature.

And all varieties of things in one.

As many charmful changes had in thought

And sweet caprice as the opal hath of hues ;

Would set at night in clouds of tears, and rise

All light and laughter in the morning : fear

No petty customs nor appearances ;

But think what others only dreamed about ;

And say what others did but think ; and do

What others would but say ; and glory in

What others dared but do ; so pure withal

In soul : in heart and act such conscious, yet

Such careless innocence, she made round her

A halo of delight ; 'twas these that won me ;

And that she never schooled within her breast

One thought or feeling, but gave holiday

To all ; and that she made all even mine,

In the communion of love : and we

Grew like each other, for we loved each other ;

She, mild and generous as the air in spring ;

And I, like earth, all budding out with love.

LUCIFER. And then, love's old end, falsehood ; nothing worse
I hope ?

FESTUS. What's worse than falsehood ? to deny

The god that is within us, and in all

Is love ? Love hath as many vanities

As charms ; and this, perchance, the chief of both :

To make our young heart's track upon the first,

And snowlike fall of feeling which overspreads

The bosom of the youthful maiden's mind,

More pure and fair than even its outward type.
 If one did thus, was it from vanity?
 Or thoughtlessness, or worse? Nay, let it pass,
 The beautiful are never desolate;
 But some one always loves them—God or man.
 If man abandons, God himself takes them.
 I know not why love falters. Sense perchance
 Of other's perfectness discourageth us.
 Rather than spurs one to the like. Such doubt
 Howe'er resolved, there rose between her star
 And mine a cloud; which, lifted, showed this set.
 That, mingled with Heaven's day. It was even thus.
 I said we were to part. She nothing spake.
 There was no discord; it was music ceased;
 Life's thrilling, bounding, glorying joy, ceased. *Sate*
 Like a house-god, she, her hands fixed on her knee.
 Her dark hair loose and long, the wild bright eye
 Of desolation flashed through, lay around her.
 She spake not, moved not; more than act or speech
 Her eye I felt. I came and knelt beside her.
 And my heart shook this building of my breast,
 Like a live engine booming up and down.
 It is the saddest and the sorest sight,
 One's own love weeping. But why call on God
 This, now, or that decree, crude, as we think,
 Or cruel, to recast for us, or reverse,
 But that the feeling of the boundless bounds
 All feeling as the welkin doth the world?
 Then first both wept, then closed and clung together.
 Then, like snow-wreath of peerless purity
 That upon mountain heights, by daily veer
 Of just one light-ray, loosening, line by line,
 Its hiddenest heart-hold, slowly absolves itself
 From all its haughty coldness, and seeks peace
 Even at the cliff's foot; so she, white, by mine;
 Weird, much unchanged, as seemed, in outward cheer,
 But love's preeminence lost in life, life lost.
 Never were beauty, love, and woe so wrought
 Together into madness, as that hour.
 Then comes the feeling which unmakes, undoes;
 Which tears up by the roots the sealike soul,
 And lashes it in scorn against the skies.
 Twice did I madly swear, hand clenched, to heaven,
 That not even he nor death should tear her from me.
 Profane defiance 'twas, 'gainst each. Here, last,
 Upon this breast, she swooned; here, midst these arms;
 Here, cloudlike, poured she forth her love which was
 Her life to freshen this parched heart. In vain.
 Nor looked I e'er again on her alive.
 She wished, she said, to die. She wished; she died.
 The lightning loathes its cloud; such souls their clay.
 Can I forget that hand I took in mine,

Pale as pale violets ? that eye where soul
 And sense met, like divine ? Ah no, may God
 That moment judge me when I do ! Oh ! fair
 Was she, her nature once all brightness, spring.
 And ominous beauty, like a maiden sword,
 Startlingly beautiful, whose dark flashes hide
 Deaths many, more triumphs. I see thee now,
 Whate'er thou art, thy spirit is in my mind ;
 Thy shadow hourly lengthens o'er my brain,
 And peoples all its pictures with thyself.
 Gone, not forgot, passed, not lost ; thou shalt shine
 In heaven, as even a bright spot in the sun.
 And now I am alone. Say on ! What more
 Can tempt save union of love with death ?
 But yester-eve it was she died, and now
 Scarce hath the spirit yet aspired to heaven.
 I feel it hovering round me. Let mine eyes
 But realize their faith, and I am thine.
 The soul first, then the body and the grave
 Are welcome or indifferent as may be.

LUCIFER. With those whom Death hath drawn I meddle not.
 My part is with the living solely here.
 I have not told thee half I will do for thee.
 All secrets thou shalt ken—all mysteries construe ;
 At nothing marvel. All the veins which stretch,
 Unsearchable by human eyes, of lore
 Most precious, most profound, to thine shall bare
 And vulgar lie like dust. The world within,
 The world above thee, and the dark domain,
 Mine own thou shalt o'errule ; and he alone
 Who rightly can esteem such high delights,
 He only merits—he alone shall have.

FESTUS. And if I have, shall I be happier ? Say
 What's pleasure ? What is happiness ?

LUCIFER. It is that
 I vouchsafe to thee.

FESTUS. Am I tempted thus
 Unto my fall ?

LUCIFER. God wills or lets it be.
 How thinkest thou ?

FESTUS. That I will go with thee.

LUCIFER. From God I come.

FESTUS. I do believe thee, spirit.
 He will not let thee harm me. Him I love,
 And thee I fear not. I obey him.

LUCIFER. Good.
 Both time and case are urgent. Come. But see !
 Nay ; night hath one more marvel than the moon.

FESTUS. I glimpse the pale flash of an angel's wing,
 But whose I see not, nor, though seer-born, know.

LUCIFER. Spells too have I, thou knowest ; and my ring,
 The round horizon of the visible world,

Will hold a ghost or two. But what is this?
Superfluous were all evocation here.

No interruption, sure; no afterthought?

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Spirit of Ill, who round the spheréd air
Roamest, thy interference ratified
By God's will, for the time my task annuls;
And I, by word supreme, my charge resign.

LUCIFER. Happy relief 'twere, doubtless for thyself,
And many a myriad like thee, angel notes!
Ye are a race superior far to doves;
Whiter in plume, and in the pen-feather
More potent, notably. Thy cure be mine.

FESTUS. I hear a mixed sound as of light and night
In shadowy conference.

LUCIFER. It concerneth thee,
And yet thou mayst not know.

FESTUS. Be as it may
That, canst thou say me truly?

LUCIFER. Wherefore not?
Falselhood and truth to me indifferent be;
Nor more than that, this penal. Not to know
All things, so much still knowing; to what end
The universe is tending, when fulfilled
Its spatial orbitation; in what die
The metamorphic essence lastly cools;
Nor how, in finite creature, good and ill
Should infinitely differ, forms the curse
And penalty all pay. I, most, whom Fate
Aye drives contrarious on the fiery lines
I break not, and which cannot bear me down.
I grow impatient of this goalless race,
Recessions and precessions: and this change
Of elemental atoms without end;
Of self-paid dues, and plagues the world enjoys;
And renovative ruin; swarms of life
In the corrupting corse creation seems.
It is time that something should begin to end.
I have beheld the inflation of the world;
And dogged the huge delusion; I await
The cloudy wreck, trailed o'er the tract of time.

FESTUS. Where imperfection ceaseth heaven begins
Where sin ends, bliss.

LUCIFER. To thee mayhap is joy;
Or ultimate or immediate, here or there.
But I who deathless seem to myself and live
With these world-shadowing skies life's primal form,
Life's final, like compeer, shall woeful hail
Woe's abrogation; for if God said—threat
To me, to all else promise—let all woe
Cease, cease I too with woe; my total power
O'er being perforce then closed. But as the sun,
Opening with fiery key the locks of ice

Slow yielding, and from breasts of barrenness
 A fruitful flood drawing that with new life
 Redeems creation, endless store still leaves
 Of 'lost unloosed, so, if to me, supposed
 Evict from nature, God shall yet retain
 The evil of mine own Being, it were enough
 This sensible to eternize. I, meanwhile,
 With doom unsure but menacing crowned, the round
 Termless, of fixed finality to all things,
 Myself except, and mine own sorrows, tread
 E'er, and re-tread. To waste, to spoil's to live.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Do thou thy best, thy worst, thou still art
 foiled.

And while ingriding even thy gravest wound,
 Losest thine aim : that wound is healed of death.

LUCIFER. Art thou not hence, celestial sinecure ?
 Instead of lolling on his shoulders, him
 Thou yet mayst see on mine.

FESTUS. Again I hear,
 As though some Titan cloud, gold-lipped, at ease
 Immense, held passing word-play with the sun.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Yet not in idlesse, holy though it were,
 Nor marble meditation, nor mere thought
 Of the supreme perfection, thought alone
 Worthy the name of thought in soul create ;
 The river homaging its ocean fount
 In every whispering wavelet, wrap I me ;
 Far other aim be mine. Yes, he shall know
 The hidden extremes of nature ; earth's, sea's, air's ;
 The central fires ; both world and wilderness
 Like tempting, though with diverse offering ; power,
 Love, knowledge blent ; nor—though by Ill devised
 To obscure God's truth, the consciousness of soul
 Ever existent ; its individual source,
 Its universal end—shall all things prove
 But tests and purifiers ; nay, thou thyself
 The evil of all things made, Ill's forceful soul,
 Naught else than foil of good.

LUCIFER. Bereaved of thee
 We may prepare to see strange sights indeed ;
 Earth's polar linch-pins loosened, and the wheels
 Of light and dark that the world drags on, smashed.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. I leave him, not desert : for, fortified
 With the pure love of one, he God shall love
 For granting him that blessing. For the rest,
 In heaven's eternal archives all is writ,
 Pertaining to the mountain-throned end.
 I will prepare my loved one's destiny ;
 And with my kindred angels smoothen his ways
 So among men, that he o'er all may cope,
 Throneworthy through all ages ; hallowed, blessed ;
 Born of the lofty lineage of the light,

And gifted with the sceptre of a star,
 In state pre-temporal, fated to earth's end.
 Prophets shall preach of him, and wise men win,
 By secret power, the world to choose him chief ;
 The universal faith impersonate.
 Peace to the soul-world, and the grand belief
 Wherein are blended truth and bliss, shall he,
 By aidance of the blessed, install on earth,
 Calmly at once, as heaven instates its stars.

LUCIFER. Athwart this web, then, must I throw my warp.
 Can I not dim the intelligence with eclipse
 Of sagest-seeming doubt, owl-eyed to mark
 Small ills, of reason's light-broad world of good,
 Noteless ? With specious theories of the rise
 Eterne of things, and end of temporal means,
 His spirit confuse, and ravelling every thought
 Inexplicably that shows God's simple will
 Not chance, not mere development as cause
 Of progress always heightening, better ever,
 Than stand-point passed, God he may cease to see ?
 Can I not poison all the springs of life
 And founts of feeling ? friendship make a void,
 And love a golden snare wherein his heart
 Shall rage like a trapped lion ? Hath wit power
 To satisfy the soul, or power then wit
 To save the spirit from despair ?

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Ordained
 To nobler ends than aught thou reck'st of, he,
 As in time passed from all perfective rites,
 From every test, soul-tried, shall wisdom win,
 As flowers sweet sustenance from the invisible air ?
 And common elements.

LUCIFER. I mine own ends seek,
 Not God's. Ordained or not, means nought to me.
 Sin and be saved, can God's elect, if he
 Elect be ? Prove it, time. Love, knowledge, power,
 These are my costliest baits ; and on his path
 Must these be spread. Distracted with delights
 I know, too, let me fancy he escapes.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. God's servant is man's master. So shall rule,
 One with heaven's spiritual sun whose light
 Soul-quickenning, Being with truest life impregns,
 The spirit I have all life tended on, endowed
 Henceforth with plenar powers of virtual sight,
 And sense extreme of primitive perfectness,
 By him, all-ordering, the infinite One. And now,
 Scion of life eterne, and ward of heaven,
 Mine earthly charge, for a time farewell !

FESTUS. What's that ?
 I saw a light, like earth-born lightning, shoot
 Up, through night's infinite sanctuary.

LUCIFER.

It was nothing

FESTUS. Give me a breathing-time to fortify,
Within myself, the promise I have made.

LUCIFER. Expect me, then, at midnight, here. Remember
That thou canst any time repent.

FESTUS. Ay, true.

LUCIFER. Repentance never yet did aught on earth.
It undoes many good things. Of all men,
Heaven shield me from the wretch who can repent !

III.

Follows a starry night
Where in the talk of man and spirit we see
Foreproven, the all-grasping mind's inordinate love
For marvels, mysteries, than for goodness more
Nay even for greatness. Miracles we must have.
Whence comes this dream of immortality
And the resurgent essence ? Death is change.
But spirit's return, allowed of heaven, is now
To strengthen a fine but fainting faith, and show
Such change for better. Soul reborn, we see,
Stalls not in death ; but like the polar sun,
One moment balanced on life's infinite verge,
Rises in roseate splendour to renew
Always a mightier day. The spell, as pledge
Of gifts to come and prouder privilege, works.
Man and his foe shake hands upon their bargain.

Water and Wood—Midnight.

FESTUS, alone.

All things are calm, and fair, and passive. Earth
Looks as if lulled upon an angel's lap,
Into a breathless dewy sleep : so still
That we can only say of things, they be.
The lakelet now, no longer vexed with gusts,
Replaces on her breast the pictured moon,
Pearled round with stars. Sweet imaged scene of time
To come, perchance, when, this vain life o'erspent,
Earth may some purer beings' presence bear ;
Mayhap even God may walk among his saints,
In eminence and brightness like yon moon,
Mildly outbeaming all the beads of light
Strung o'er Night's proud dark brow. How strangely fair
Yon round still star, which looks half suffering from,
And half rejoicing in its own strong fire ;
Making itself a loneliness of light,
Like Deity, where'er in heaven it dwells.
How can the beauty of material things
So win the heart and work upon the mind,
Unless like-natured with them ? Are great things

And thoughts of the same blood ? They have like effect.
Would one were here who could these knots unloose !

LUCIFER. Why doubt on mind ? What matter how we call
That which all feel to be their noblest part ?

Even spirits have a better and a worse :

For every thing created must have form ;

Form meaning limitation. God, alone,

Is formless and illimitable mind.

Passions they have, somewhat like thine ; but less

Of grossness and that downwardness of soul

Men boast of. It is true they have no earth ;

For what they live on is above themselves.

FESTUS. There seems a sameness among things ; for mind

And matter speak, in causes, of one God.

The inward and the outward worlds are like ;

The pure and gross but differ in degree.

Tears, feeling's bright embodied form, are not

More pure than dewdrops, nature's tears, which she

Sheds in her own breast for the fair which die.

The sun insists on gladness ; but at night,

When he is gone, poor nature loves to weep.

LUCIFER. Less real difference is there among things

Than men imagine. They overlook the mass,

But fasten each on some particular crumb,

Because they feel that they can equal that,

Of doctrine, or belief, or party cause.

FESTUS. That is the madness of the world—and that
Would I remove.

LUCIFER. It is imbecility,

Not madness.

FESTUS. Oh ! the brave and good who serve

A worthy cause can only one way fail ;

By perishing therein. Is it to fail ?

No ; every great or good man's death is a step

Firm set towards their end, the end of being ;

The good of all, and love of God. The world

Must have great minds, even as great spheres or suns,

To govern lesser restless minds, while they

Stand still and burn with life ; to keep in place,

Light, heat them. Life immortal do I seek,

For aught, it were most to learn mind's mystery,

And somewhat more of God. Let others rule

Systems or succour saints, if such things please ;

To live like light, or die in light like dew ;

Either, I should be blessed.

LUCIFER. It may not be.

For as not the sun himself thou viewest, but only

The light about him, like the glory ringed

Round a saint's brow ; so, God thou wilt never see,

Darkness of light radiative. Nor seek.

His naked love were terrible. Saints dread more

To be forgiven than sinners do to die.

FESTUS. Men have a claim on God ; and none who hath
 A heart of kindness, reverence, and love,
 But dare look God in the face and ask his smile.
 He dwells in no fierce light—no cloud of flame ;
 And if it were, Faith's eye can look through hell,
 And through the solid world. We must all think
 On God. Yon water must reflect the sky.
 Midnight ! Day hath too much of light for us,
 To see things spiritually. Mind and Night
 Will meet, though in silence, like forbidden lovers,
 With whom to see each other's sacred form
 Must satisfy. The stillness of deep bliss,
 Sound as the silence of the high hill-top,
 Where thunder finds no echo—like God's voice
 Upon the worldling's proud, cold, rocky heart—
 Fills full the sky ; and the eye shares with heaven
 That look, so like to feeling, nature's bright
 And glorious things aye wear. There's much to think
 And feel of things beyond this earth ; which lie,
 As we deem, upwards, far from the day's glare
 And riot. They are Night's. Oh ! could we lift
 The future's sable shroud !

LUCIFER. Behind a shroud
 What should'st thou see but death ?

FESTUS. Spirit ; the thread
 Sightless, whereon are strung life's world-great beads.
 It may be here, I shall live again ; or there,
 In yon strange world whose long nights know no star ;
 But seven fair maidlike moons attending him
 Perfect his sky ; perchance in one of those ;
 But live again I shall, wherever it be.
 We long to learn the future ; love to guess.

LUCIFER. The science of the future were to man
 What the wind's shadow might be, sought he screen
 From fire or flood. Save in the effect of act,
 And the interlinkèd sequences of things,
 Whereby to ourselves we make passed, present, coming,
 There is no future. Why so fret this string ?
 Such thoughts are vain and useless.

FESTUS. Forced on us.

LUCIFER. All things are of necessity.

FESTUS. Then best.

But the good are never fatalists. The bad
 Alone act by necessity, they say.

LUCIFER. It matters not what men assume to be
 Or good or bad, they are but what they are.

FESTUS. What is necessity ? Are we, and thou,
 And all the worlds, and the whole infinite
 We cannot see, but working out God's thoughts ?
 And have we no self-action ? Are all God ?

LUCIFER. Then hath he sin and all absurdity.

FESTUS. Yet, if created Being have free-will.

Is it not wrong to judge it may traverse
God's own high will ; and yet impossible
To think on't otherwise ?

LUCIFER. It may be so.
All creature wills, and all their ends and powers
Must come within the boundless scope of God's.

FESTUS. And all our powers are but weaknesses
To what we shall have, and to that God hath.
Doth not the wish, too, point the likelihood,
Of life to come ?

LUCIFER. Boys wish that they were kings,
And so with thee. A deathless spirit's state,
Freed from gross form and bodily weightiness,
Seems kingly by the side of souls like thine.
And boys and men will likely both be balked.
What if,—death after—spirit were loosed, like flesh,
Into its elements ? Hold yon worlds, man maps
Constellate, fellowship in nature ? Life,
Mind, soul, as he hath planned, perchance no more.
But sooth to say, I know not aught of this.
I have no kind. No nature like to me
Exists ; and human spirits must at least
Sleep till the day of doom—if ever it be.

FESTUS. Hast never known one free from body ?

LUCIFER.

None.

FESTUS. Why seek then to destroy them ?

LUCIFER.

It is my part.

Let ruin bury ruin. Let it be
Woe here, woe there, woe, woe be everywhere.
It is not for me to know, nor thee, the end
Of evil. I inflict ; and thou must bear.
The arrow knoweth not its end nor aim.
And I keep rushing, ruining along,
Like a great river rich with dead men's souls,
For if I knew, I might rejoice ; and that
To me by nature is forbidden. I know
Nor joy in ill's success, such as elates
Lesser malevolences ; nor sorrow sours
My soul at sight of heaven's unwearying love
Manwards. With me through time, a changeless tone
Of sadness like the nightwind's is the strain
Of what I have of feeling. I am not
As other spirits,—but a solitude
Even to myself ; I the sole spirit, sole.

FESTUS. Can none of thine immortals answer me ?

LUCIFER. None, mortal !

FESTUS. Where then is thy vaunted power ?

LUCIFER. It is better seen as thus I stand apart
From all. Mortality is mine—the green
Unripened universe. But as the fruit
Matures, and world by world drops mellowed off
The wrinkling stalk of Time, as thine own race

Hath seen of stars now vanished, all is hid
From me. My part is done. What after comes,
I know not more than thou.

FESTUS. Raise me a spirit !

LUCIFER. Command o'er natural essence, space, time, matter,
I yield thee. Can I give thee power o'er soul ?

FESTUS. Awake, ye dead ! out with the secret, death ;

The grave hath no pride, nor the rise-again,

Let each one bring the bane whereof he died.

Bring the man his, the maiden hers ! Oh ! half

Mankind are murderers of themselves or souls.

Yea, what is life but lingering suicide ?

Wake, dead ! Ye know the truth ; yet there ye lie

All m'ngling, mouldering, perishing together,

Like run sand in the hour-glass of old Time.

Death is the mad world's asylum. There is peace :

Destruction's quiet and equality.

Night brings out stars as sorrow shows us truths :

Though many, yet they help not ; bright, they light not.

They are too late to serve us ; and sad things

Are aye too true. We never see the stars

Till we can see nought but them. So with truth.

And yet if one would look down a deep well,

Even at noon, we might see those same stars

Far fairer than the blinding blue—the truth.

Probe the profound of thine own nature, man !

And thou mayst see reflected, e'en in life,

The worlds, the heavens, the ages ; by and by,

The coming come. Then welcome, world-eyed Truth !

But there are other eyes men better love

Than Truth's : for when we have her she is so cold,

And proud, we know not what to do with her.

We cannot understand her, cannot teach ;

She makes us love her, but she loves not us ;

And quits us as she came and looks back never.

Wherefore we fly to Fiction's warm embrace,

With her to relax and bask ourselves at ease ;

And, in her loving and unhindering lap

Voluptuously lulled, we dream at most

On death and truth ; she knows them, loves them not ;

Therefore we hate them and deny them both.

LUCIFER. But could I make that visible always there ?

FESTUS. Call up the dead.

LUCIFER. Let rest while rest they may.

For free from pain and from this world's wear and tear,

It may be a relief to them to rot ;

And it must be that at the day of doom,

If mortals should take up immortal life,

They will curse me with a thunder which shall shake

The sun from out the socket of his sphere.

The curse of all created. Think on it.

FESTUS. Those souls thou meanest, whom thou hast ruined, damned.

LUCIFER. Nor only those ; when once the virgin bloom
Of soul is soiled ; and rudely hath my hand
Swept o'er the swelling clusters of all life ;
Little it matters whether crushed or touched
Scarcely : each speaks the spoiler hath been there.
The saved, the lost, shall curse me both alike :
God too shall curse me, and I, I, myself.
That curse is ever greatingening, quick with hell ;
The coming consummation of all woe.

FESTUS. O man, be happy. Die and cease for ever.
Why wear we not the shroud alway, that robe
Which speaks our rank on earth, our privilege ?
To know I have a deathless soul I would lose it.

LUCIFER. Believest thou all I tell thee ?

FESTUS. All, I do.
Stringing the stars at random round her head,
Like a pearl network, there she sits, bright Night !
I love night more than day, she is so lovely.
But I love night the most because she brings
My love to me in dreams which scarcely lie ;
Oh, all but truth and lovelier oft than truth ;
Let me have dreams like these, sweet night, for ever,
When I shall wake no more ; an endless dream
Of love and holy beauty amid the stars ;
And earth and heaven for me may share between them
The rough realities of other bliss.

LUCIFER. I see thy heart, and I will grant thy wish
I have lied to thee. I have command over spirits ;
And e'er behold them, bodiless as space.
Whom wilt thou that I call ?

FESTUS. Mine Angela !

LUCIFER. There is an Angel ever by thine hand.
What seest thou ?

FESTUS. It is my love. It is she !
My glory, spirit, beauty ! let me touch thee.
Nay do not shrink back ; well then I am wrong :
Thou wert not wont to shrink from me, my love,
Angela ! dost thou hear me ? Speak to me.
And thou art there ; looking alive and dead.
Thy beauty is then incorruptible.
I thought so, oft as I have looked upon thee.
Thou art too much even now for me as once.
I cannot gather what I raved to say ;
Nor why I had thee hither. Stay, sweet sprite !
Dear art thou to me now, as in that hour
When first love's wave of feeling, spray-like, broke
Into bright utterance, and we said we loved.
Yea, but I must come to thee. Move no more.
Art thou in death or heaven, or from the stars ?
She speaks not. 'Tis a phantom maybe, only.

Have I done wrong in calling for thee thus ?
 What art thou ? Say, love ; whisper me as wont,
 In the dear times gone by ; or durst not here,
 Unfold the mystery of thine own bright being,
 And mine ? Was't meddling death who hushed thy lips ?
 Is his cold finger there still ? Let me come !
 She is not !

LUCIFER. And thou canst not bring her back.

FESTUS. I will not, cannot be without her. Call her.

LUCIFER. I call on spirits and I make them come ;
 But they depart according to their own will.
 Another time and she shall speak with thee.
 For, of thy state no more, to know her thou
 Into her sphere must rise.

FESTUS. What most I'd know
 Is how soul acts, how suffers ; how the God
 Treats, death achieved, man's mind.

LUCIFER. She of the passed
 Shall there fulfil thy spirit ; and, holding forth
 The bright clue, which like lightning's friendly flash
 Before one, night-lost in a wood, shall guide
 The soul its path through life's returnless maze,
 And teach the mystery of thyself. All this,
 Ere long ; and she shall show thee where she dwells,
 And how doth pass her immortality ;
 If lengthening decay can so be called.
 Can lines finite one way be infinite
 Another ? And yet such is deathlessness.

FESTUS. It is hard to deem that spirits cease, that thought
 And feeling flesh-like perish in the dust.
 Shall we know those again in a future state
 Whom we have known and loved on earth ? Say yes !

LUCIFER. The mind hath features as the body hath.

FESTUS. But is it mind which shall revive ?

LUCIFER. Man were
 Not man without the mind he had in life.
 But, think. When dead and buried what remains,
 That such an obscure, contradictory thing
 Should be perpetuated anywhere ?

FESTUS. Oh ! if God hates the flesh, why made he it
 So beautiful that e'en its semblance maddens ?
 Am I to credit what I think I have seen ?
 Or am I suffering some deceit of thine ?

LUCIFER. I am explaining, not deluding.

FESTUS. True.
 Defining night by darkness, death by dust.
 I run the gauntlet of a file of doubts,
 Each one of which down hurls me to the ground.
 I ask a hundred reasons what they mean,
 And every one points gravely to the ground
 With one hand, and to heaven with the other.
 In vain I shut mine eyes. Truth's burning beam

Forces them open ; and when open, blinds them.

LUCIFER. Doubly unhappy !

FESTUS. I am too unhappy.

To die ; as some too way-worn cannot sleep.
Planets and suns, that set themselves on fire
By their own rapid self-revolvements, are
But like some hearts. Existence I despise.
The shape of man is wearisome ; a bird's ;
A worm's ; a whirlwind's ; I would change with aught.
Time ! dash thine hour-glass down. Have done with this.
The course of nature seems a course of death ;
The prize of life's brief race, to cease to run ;
The sole substantial thing, death's nothingness.

LUCIFER. Corruption springs from light ; 'tis one same power
Creates, preserves, destroys ; matter whereon
It works, one e'er self-transmutative form,
Common to now the living, now the dead.

FESTUS. I'll not believe a thing which I have known.
Hell was made hell for me, and I am mad.

LUCIFER. True venom churns the froth out of the lips ;
It works, and works, like any waterwheel.
And she then was the maiden of thy heart.
Well, I have promised. Ye shall meet again.
But stay ; take this, a final warning. Aught
Thou hast seen, hold not too sure. Ofttimes the brain
Dreams waking ; with vitality endows
Its own creations ; argues ; thought's best proofs,
Things spiritual projecting on gross sense,
As shadows upon boards, refutes.

FESTUS. What, all
Illusion, vision, sleight of touch, or tongue ?

LUCIFER. I say not so. This, that is probable.
Now, shall we go ?

FESTUS. This moment. I am ready ;
Farewell ye dear old walks and trees ; farewell
Ye waters ; I have loved ye well. In youth
And childhood it hath been my life to drift
Across ye lightly as a leaf ; or skim
Your waves in yon skiff, swallowlike ; or lie
Like a loved locket on your sunny bosom.
Could I, like you, by looking in myself,
Find mine own heaven—farewell ! Immortal, come !
The morning peeps her blue eye on the east.

LUCIFER. Think not so fondly as thy foolish race,
Imagining a heaven from things without ;
The picture on the passing wave call heaven ;
The wavelet, life ; the sands beneath it, death ;
Daily more seen till, lo ! the bed is bare.
This fancy fools the world.

FESTUS. Let us away !

LUCIFER. Wings of the wind, be ours ! once, twice, away !

IV.

Now sets the youth out for joy, the city of joy,
Whose walls illuminated with all-hued spheres
Beacon the immense of life. He, 'neath the care
Of his kindly enemy, begins his course ;
Each aiding other ; all beside abused.

Heaven, hell, life pre-existent, things not yet,
Things passed, immemorable, foreshadowy, show
Briefwise before the all-questful spirit, intent
To prove its dominance o'er the world, till taught
Earth, air, nor fire, nor all the elements fused
Into one subtlest essence, aught avail
The soul to assist or to divert, once charged
God's mighty but mysterious ends to achieve ;
Ends more substantial than all solidest things.

A Mountain. Sunrise.

FESTUS and LUCIFER.

FESTUS. Morn on the mountains ! Mark her lifening glow,
Light's blessed advent prophesying ; and now
The awful signals, sensible, but scarce seen,
Of the under-welkin'd sun. Here, midst this fane,
With the awe of space domed, let me, sole with God,
In privacy of his omnipresence, pray ;
And while the unboundedness of earth and sky
Seizes in silence all the spirit, let me,
With nature one, for like dependent life,
Grateful, adore.

LUCIFER. Oh, pray adore : I'm dumb.

FESTUS. In silence soul most nears the Infinite.
Hail beauteous Earth ! Gazing o'er thee, I all
Forget the bounds of being ; and I long
To fill thee, as a lover pines to blend
Soul, passion, yea, existence, with the fair
Creature he calls his own. I ask for nought
Before or after death but this—to lie,
And look, and live, and bask, and bless myself
Upon thy broad bright bosom.

LUCIFER. Earth's the Lord's.

FESTUS. True ; I should be more reverent. Thou hast all
Nature's supremest sanctities, earth. From thee
Sprang I, to thee I turn, heart, arm, and brain.
Yes, I am all thine own. Thou art the sole
Parent. To rock and river, plain and wood,
I cry, ye are my kin. While I, O earth !
Am but of thee an atom, and a breath,
Passing unseen and unrecorded, like
The tiny throb here in my temple's pulse.
Thou art for ever ; and the sacred bride
Of heaven ; worthy the passion of our God.

Oh ! full of light, love, grace ; the grace of all
 Who owe to thee their life ; thy maker's love ;
 His face's light. All thine rejoice in thee ;
 Thou in thyself for aye ; rolling through air,
 As seraph's song, out of their trumpet lips,
 Rolls round the skies of heaven. But who is this,
 Burning the clouds before him ; the round world
 Apt to his golden grasp ? his fingers all
 Streaming with light effectual to impart
 Full fellowship of illuminate life ; from out
 The depths extreme, who comes, of orient space ?
 Undo those gilded bars : fling wide yon gates
 Eastwards, of changeful pearl ; wide o'er his ways,
 Strew palms, as 'fore heaven's conqueror, and the night
 Flying hosts, star-standarded ; make pure his paths
 With rain of liquid crystal. He shall see
 How earth can put on majesty, to meet
 The king in her own mansion. Let the morn
 Pour, penitent for the passed, o'er all his head,
 Her wealthful waste of perfumed sweets ; his feet
 Let kiss, with all her dew. It is he, the sun !
 God's crest upon his azure shield the heavens,
 Canst thou, a spirit, look upon him ?

LUCIFER.

Ay.

I led him from the void, where he was wrought,
 By this right hand, up to the glorious seat
 His brightness overshadows ; laid on piles
 Of gold his chambers, and upon beams of gold
 His throne built ; flung a fire-veil round his face ;
 Crowned him with rays reverberant from all clouds :
 And bade him reign, and burn, like me. Like me
 Fall, too, he must. I have done, do, nought else
 From my first thought to this and to my last.
 No matter ; it is beneath this mind of mine
 To reck of aught. I bear, have borne the ill
 Of ages, of infinities ; and must.
 I care not. I shall sway the world as now ;
 Which worse and worse sinks with me as I sink,
 Till finite souls evanish as a vapour ;
 Till immortality, the proud thing, perish ;
 And God alone be and eternity.
 Then will I clap my hands and cry to him,
 I have done : have thy will now, there is none but thee.
 I am the first created being (ceased
 Necessity and nature and with them
 The strain of imperfection) : I the last
 Will be for ever to perish and to die.

FESTUS. Thou art a fit monitor, methinks, of pleasure.

LUCIFER. To the high air, sunshine and cloud are one ;
 Pleasure and pain to me. Thou and the earth
 Alone feel these as different ; for ye
 Are under them ; the heavens and I above.

Makes to each spirit its peculiar heaven.
 These thou mayst yet not miss ; intent to learn
 Mere exigencies of being ; nor seek to know
 Beyond what bears on judgment, be'est thou wise ;
 For I no further tempt thee to a risk
 That might ensure all ruin ere thy time.
 And yet is heaven a bright reality,
 As this, or any of yon worlds ; a state
 Where all is loveliness, and power, and love ;
 Where all sublimest qualities of mind,
 Not infinite ; are limited alone
 By the all-surrounding godhood ; and where nought
 But what createth glory and delight
 To creature and Creator is ; where all
 Enjoy entire dominion o'er themselves,
 Acts, feelings, thoughts, conditions, qualities,
 Spirit and soul and mind ; all under God ;
 For spirit is soul deified ; while earth,
 To the immortal, vast, god-natured spirit
 Is but a spell, which having served to light
 A lamp, is cast into consuming fire.
 Such, and so sweet is memory to the sage
 Expert of good and evil. But, enough.

FESTUS. And hell ? Is it nought but pits, and chains, and flames ?

LUCIFER. An ever greatening sense of ill and woe,
 The exhausted soul down-crushing, filling never
 Its infinite capacity of pain.

FESTUS. But human is not infinite,
 And cannot, therefore, suffer endlessly.

LUCIFER. God may create in time what shall endure
 Unto eternity. With him is none
 Distinction, nor in that which is of him.

FESTUS. Then is not soul of God, but man and earth.
 Soul when made spirit is of earth no more,
 Nor time, but of eternity and heaven.
 It is but when in the body and bent down
 To worldly ends that human souls become
 Objects of time, as most are, till the hour
 Comes, when the soul of man shall be made one
 With God's spirit ; made eternal, made divine ;
 And where shall woe be then ? sin ? suffering ?

LUCIFER. How
 Shall soul thus favoured, then, predestined thus,
 To glory afore all worlds, be deemed of earth
 Earthy ?

FESTUS. Things spiritual as belonging God,
 Are to and from eternity, by him
 Predestined, known ; nor these alone ; but flesh
 Forms not, nor doth it need the care of fate.

LUCIFER. The object of eternal knowledge must
 Have like existence.

FESTUS. Then it cannot be

Bound unto torment, that would dreadly bring
Torture on godlike essence.

LUCIFER. What if thine
Existence on this sphere were but, as told,
In mystic tales of old spread over earth,
The dark and narrow section of a life
Which was with God, long ere the sun was lit:
And shall be yet, when all the bold bright stars
Are dark as death-dust; Immortality
And Wisdom tending thee on either hand,
Thy divine sisters? What if earth-life prove,
Of thee and thy conceptions head and end,
Who were to blame? Thou canst not surely expect
Me to know all things.

FESTUS. Truly, I have heard
Sometimes, or deemed, what deepest musings failed
To explain, or render more than dubious, lips,
Uncorporal lips, articulate in mine ear,
Lessons, long ages back learned; deemed I have felt
Off-times a shadowiest conception seize
My spirit, as though the echo of a life
Far passed, rang through one's being, and thrilled the heart
With sense of joys requickened, of thought rethought,
Of difficulties fore-vanquished, and of truth
Taught by a sacred death regenerative,
Which, justified from sin, as though were mine
A life half conscious of sublimer spheres,
A mind transescented through all faiths, refined
Through ends divine fulfilled.

LUCIFER. Ends thou mayst yet
Clear from the tangled passed, if one sole clue
Thou gloriest in.

FESTUS. Could thought but realize!—
No, it is incredible.

LUCIFER. Well, do thou believe
Even as thou wilt. The science of the passed,
The science of the future, lack them both.
Why seek such? Seize the present.

FESTUS. 'Tis all doubt.

LUCIFER. Doubt's all-where, doubtless, but in heaven.

FESTUS. And thou

Whose life shows, cataract-like, one ceaseless fall,
Mayst match it! But if doubt bide not in heaven,
Neither dwells certainty upon earth. But say,
Is it the nature or the deed of God,
To render finite follies infinite,
Or to eternize sin and death in fire?
For so long as the punishment endures,
The crime lasts. Were it not for thy presence,
Spirit! I would not deem hell were.

LUCIFER. Let not
My presence pass for more than it is worth,

And chide us for the senseless dream of heaven ?
 The still strong stream sweeps seaward to its end,
 Unrestful, unrestrainable, like one
 Of God's great purposes ; or like may be,
 A soul that seeks the Eternal ; like mine own.
 Along yon deep blue vein upon thy bosom,
 Earth ! I could float for ever. See it there,
 Winding among its green and smiling isles,
 Like charity amidst her children dear ;
 Or peace, rejoicing in her olive wreaths,
 And gladdening as she glides along the lands.

LUCIFER. And yet all this must end ; must pass ; drop down
 Oblivion, like a pebble in a pit :
 For God shall lay his hand upon the earth,
 And crush it up like a red leaf.

FESTUS. Not be ?
 I cannot root the thought, nor hold it firm.

LUCIFER. This same sweet world which thou would'st fondly
 deem

Eternal, may be ; which I soon shall see
 Destruction suck back as the tide a shell.

FESTUS. It will not be yet. I'll woo thee, world, again ;
 And revel in thy loveliness and love.

I have a heart with room for every joy :
 And since we must part sometime, while I may,
 I'll quaff the nectar in thy flowers, and press
 The richest clusters of thy luscious fruit
 Into the cup of my desires. But who
 Would care to live unless he loved, and were loved ;
 Unless he had all things young and beautiful,
 Bound up like pictures in his book of life ?
 It is vanity, of all things most, makes bear
 With life. Some live like unenlightened stars
 Of the first darkness ; lifeless, timeless, useless ;
 With nothing but a cold night air about them ;
 Not suns ; not planets ; blankness, limbed and framed ;
 Orbs of a desert gloom : with not one soul
 To light its watch-fire in their waste of being ;
 Or seem so, miserably ; but how or why
 They live I know not. This to me is life ;
 That if life be a burden, I will join

To make it but the burden of a song :
 I hate the world's coarse thought. And this is life ;
 To watch young beauty's budlike feelings burst,
 And load the soul with love ; as that pale flower
 Which opes at eve, spreads sudden on the dark
 Its yellow bloom, and sinks the air down with sweets.
 Let heaven take all that's good—hell all that's foul ;
 Leave us the lovely, and we will ask no more.

LUCIFER. To me it seems time all should end. The sky
 Grows grey. It is not so bright nor blue as once.
 Well I remember, as it were yesterday,

When earth and heaven went happy, hand in hand,
 With all the morning dew of youth about them ;
 With the bright unworldly hearts of youth and truth
 And the maiden bosoms of the beautiful :
 Ere earth sinned, or the pure indignant heavens
 Retreated high, nigh God ; ere grossening age
 Had thicked the eyes of stars : or land was all
 A creeping mass alive with shapeless things :
 Nay, when there were but three things in the world—
 Monsters, mountains, and water ; and the sea,
 Rejoicing like a ring of saints round God,
 Or heaven on heaven about some new-born sun,
 Cloud swathed, in holy hilarity laughed out,
 And cried, Nor I, like God, I never rest.

FESTUS. God hath His rest, earth hers. Let me have mine.
 Yet must I look on thee, fair scene, again,
 Ere I depart. The glory of the world
 Is on all hands. In one encircling ken,
 I gaze on river, sea, isle, continent,
 Mountain, and wood, and wild, and fire-lipped hill,
 And lake and golden plain, and sun, and heaven,
 Where the stars brightly die, whose death is day.
 City and port and palace, ships and tents,
 Lie massed and mapped before me. All is here.
 The elements of the world are at my feet,
 Above me and about me. Now would I
 Be and do somewhat beside that I am.
 Canst thou not give me some æthereal slave,
 Of the pure essence of an element ;
 Such as my boundless brain hath oftentimes drawn,
 In the divine insanity of dreams ;
 To stand before me, and obey me, spirit !

LUCIFER. Call out, and see if aught arise to thee.

FESTUS. Green dewy earth, who standest at my feet
 Singing, and pouring sunshine on thy head,
 As naiad native water, speak to me !
 I am thy son. Canst thou not now, as once,
 Bring forth some being dearer, liker to thee
 Than is my race—titan or tiny fay,
 Stream-nymph or wood-nymph ?

LUCIFER. She hath ceased to speak,
 Like God, except in thunder ; or to look,
 Unless in lightning. Miracles, with earth,
 Are out of fashion, as with heaven ; and more's
 The pity. Call elsewhere. Old earth is hard
 Of hearing, maybe.

FESTUS. I beseech thee, sea !
 Tossing thy wavy locks in sparkling play,
 Like a child awakening with the warmthful light
 To laughter ; canst not thou disgorge for me,
 From thy deep bosom, deep as heaven is high,
 Of all thy sea-gods one, or sea-maids ?

LUCIFER.

None!

PESTUS. Canst not from out that palpable vapour rolled
Shorewards, in misty gusts, thy wave's salt breath,
Mould me some voluntary shadow endowed
With powers of suit or aid?

LUCIFER.

Shadow, appear!

PESTUS. I half despair. Fire! that art slumbering there,
Like some stern warrior in his rocky fort,
After the vast invasion of the world,
Hast not some flaming imp, or messenger
Of empyrean element, who both knows
By natural virtue, of earth's central void,
Burning below, the secrets, and high Heaven's,
Out of whose æry fires come angel forms,
Harmless or ill, amenable all to power?
Hast none at hand to do my bidding? Come!
Breathe out a spirit for me; not fierce, not gross,
Nor of strength destructive, but of finest force:
Such as flames forth in flowerets; sets, in spring,
The hills ablaze with gorse-light, and with pyrea,
Odorous, of floral gold, crowns; one I ask
To be with me always as a friend, an aid;
Not, spirit, like thee, who despotizest o'er
The heart thou seekst to serve. I must be free.

LUCIFER. All finite souls must serve: their widest sway

Is but the rule of service. This fair earth
Whose parti-coloured robe thou boast'st of so;
Seest not, in truth, all this but summy dross
Of the original element whence were framed
She, and her fiery peers? Conditioned still
To the end, by birth-laws, thou and they alike
Must keep at cost of being!—What freedom thou
Canst from that teat draw, draw.

PESTUS.

Air! and thou wind!

Which art the unseen similitude of God
The Spirit, his most meet and mightiest sign:
The earth with all her steadfastness and strength,
Sustaining all, and bound about with chains
Of mountains, as is life with energies: ranging round
With all her sister orbs the whole of heaven,
Is not so like the unlikemable One
As thou. Ocean is less divine than thee;
For although all but limitless, it is yet
Visible, many a land not visiting.
But thou art, lovèlike, everywhere; o'er earth,
O'er main-sea triumphing; and aye with clouds,
That like the ghosts of ocean's billows roll,
Decking or darkening heaven. The sun's light
Floweth and ebbleth daily, like the tides;
The moon's doth grow or lessen, night by night;
The starless stars shine forth by fits and hide;
And our companion planets come and go.

In maze concentric, intercyclng, vast ;
 And all are known, their laws and liberties,
 But no man can foreset thy coming, none
 Reason against thy going ; thou art free,
 The type impalpable of spirit, thou,
 God's vital breath, great purifier of earth.
 Thunder is but a momentary thing,
 Like a world's death-rattle, and is like death ;
 And lightning, like the blaze of sin, can blind
 Only and slay. But what are these to thee,
 In thine all-present variousness ? So light
 As not to awaken, now, the snowiest down
 Upon the dove's breast, winning her bright way,
 Calm and sublime as grace to suffering soul,
 Towards her far native grove ; now, stern and strong
 As ordnance, overturning tree and tower ;
 Cooling the white brows of the peaks of fire ;
 Turning the sea's broad furrows like a plough ;
 Fanning the fruitening plains ; breathing the sweets
 Of meadows ; wandering over blinding snows ;
 And sands like sea-beds ; and the streets of cities,
 Where men as garnered grain lie heaped together ;
 Freshening the cheeks, and mingling oft the locks
 Of youth and beauty 'neath star-speaking eve ;
 Swelling the pride of canvas, or, in wrath,
 Scattering the fleets of nations like dead leaves ;
 In all, the same o'er-mastering sightless force ;
 Bowing the highest things of earth to earth,
 And lifting up the dust to the stars ; fatelike,
 Confounding finite reason, and like God's spirit,
 Regenerative, life breathing o'er the world ;
 Midst all corruption incorruptible ;
 Monarch of all the elements, earth's broad bounds
 Rounding invisibly, hast not one 'mong all
 Sylph-kind, with voluntary but viewless wing,
 To spare thy suppliant for a season ?

LUCIFER.

Hold !

All nature knows intuitive, I am here,
 With thee ; and as with desert lion, sense,
 Full strange of his proud presence, seems to o'erspread
 Sandworld, and life suspend ; so thrills, instinct
 With its fierce secret, the whole frame of things ;
 Which feels, with me, no minor minister,
 Thou needst. To thee I personate the world,
 Its faiths ; half doubt, half truth ; its practices,
 Just, surface-wise ; its powers ; all mine, at least,
 Will serve thee most intelligently. Fail these,
 Indeed, let fail success itself.

FESTUS.

Are all

Mine invocations fruitless then ?

LUCIFER.

They are.

Let us enjoy earth.

FESTUS. It were well.

LUCIFER. 'Tis time,
As when in boreal climes the southerning sun,
One hour on heaven's ærial rood suspense,
The ecliptic cleared, thereafter, east and west
More liberal day flings round ; pleased earth responds ;
And the ice-fettered rivulet, joyed, breaks up,
Clattering, in fluvial freedom ; thenceforth flowing
Deeplier and more impulsive ; so thy heart,
For a season chilled, contracted, in unseen
Currents constrained, shall now its course resume,
Leaping with life redundant.

FESTUS. Wer't God's will
That thou shouldst visit me, he shall not send
Temptation to my heart in vain. Sweet world !
We all still cling to thee. Though thou thyself
Passest away, yet men will hanker about thee,
Like mad ones by their moping haunts. Men pass,
Cleaving to things themselves which pass away
Like leaves on waves. Thus all things pass for ever,
Save mind, and the mind's meed.

LUCIFER. Let us too pass.

V.

Soul solemnized by dear ones' death, belief
In heavenly life confirmed of reason finds.
Here round her bier they meet who several rule
After the heart to each in turn their fate.
World knowledge, fruit both sweet and bitter, shows
Its green and ruddy sides, mean, generous thought.
Trial alone of ill and folly gives
Clear proof of the world's vanities ; best right
To warn, denounce. Too oft but little good
Of sermons comes, of prophecies, and warnings,
Though one most apt to admonish of man's end,
And from the steps of an old gray market cross,
The Devil is holding forth to the faithless. There,
Gravest predictions slighted most, not less,
The spirit of truth impartial may provide
Conviction just, fit utterance. So to God
A social prayer is offered up for man
Of all strains, countries, policies, creeds.

A Country Town—Market Place—Noon.

LUCIFER and FESTUS.

LUCIFER. These be the toils and cares of mighty men.
Earth's vermin are as fit to fill her thrones,
As these high heaven's bright seats.

FESTUS. Men's callings all
Are mean and vain, their wishes more so ; oft
The man is bettered by his part, or place.
How slight a chance may raise, or sink a soul.

LUCIFER. What men call accident is God's own part.
He lets ye work your will, He wills ye will.
But that ye meant not, know not, do not, he doth.

FESTUS. What is life worth without a heart to feel
The great and lovely harmonies which time
And nature change responsive, all writ out
By preconcertive hand which swells the strain
To divine fulness ; feel the poetry,
The soothing rhythm of life's fore-ordered lay,
As planned from first by its great maker ; feel
The aim and joy of things whose inner laws
Are present witnesses of God ; and once
Conform with His intent, thrice holy ; sin,
Though rebel, ne'er beyond his sceptre's length,
But sadly privileged yet by destiny
To compulsory service. Oh ! to stand
Soul raptured, on some lofty mountain thought,
And feel the spirit expand into a view
Millennial, life-exalting, of a day
When earth shall have all leisure for high ends
Of social culture ; ends a liberal law
And common peace of nations, blent with charge
Divine, shall win for man, were joy indeed ;
Nor greatly less to know what might be now,
Worked will for good with power, for one brief hour.
But look at these, these individual souls ;
How sadly men show out of joint with man.
There are millions never think a noble thought.
But with brute hate of brightness bay a mind
Which drives the darkness out of them, like hounds.
Throw but a false glare round them, and in shoals
They rush upon perdition ; that's the race.
What charm is in this world-scene to such minds
Blinded by dust ? What can they do in heaven :
A state of spiritual means, and ends ?

LUCIFER. Who knows ?
What hinders, not the less, if, these betwixt
And that pure heaven thou dreamst of, some broad zone
Of mild ætherial order, spread, where souls,
Tempered prospectively, through dateless years,
And lustral, fit themselves to loftier life,
And ends more estimable than these we see ?

FESTUS. Such state were not unreasonable ; but who
Unless in dreams or visions, knows the like ?
Thus must I doubt ; perpetually, I doubt.

LUCIFER. Who never doubted never half believed ;
Where doubt, there truth is ; 'tis her shadow, I
Declare to thee the passed is not. All life

I have looked o'er, yet never seen the age
That had been, nor to be. Why dread or dream
About the future? Nothing but what is, is,
Else God were not the maker that he seems,
Like constant in creating as in being.
Embrace the present. Let the coming pass.

FESTUS. Thou windest and unwindest faith at will,
What am I to believe?

LUCIFER. I am allowed
By common law to instigate. Not even thou
Wouldst wish me more. Know then thou mayest believe
But that thou art forced to.

FESTUS. Then I feel perforce
That instinct of immortal life in me
Which prompts me to provide for it.

LUCIFER. Perhaps.

FESTUS. There shall be no uncertainty with me,
Ere yet we part.

LUCIFER. The prospect pleases still,

FESTUS. Man hath a knowledge of a time to come;
His most important knowledge; the weight lies
Nearest the short end, this life; and the world
Depends on what's to be. I would deny
The present, if the future. Oh! there is
A life to come, or all's a dream.

LUCIFER. And all

May be a dream. Thou seest in thine, men, deeds,
Clear, moving, full of speech and order. Why
May not, then, all this world be but a dream
Of God's? Fear not. Some morning God may waken.

FESTUS. I would it were so. This life's a mystery.
The value of a thought cannot be told;
But it is clearly worth a thousand lives
Like many men's. And yet men love to live,
As if mere life were worth the living for.

LUCIFER. What but perdition will it be to most?

FESTUS. Life's more than breath and the quick round of
blood;

It is a great spirit and a busy heart,
The coward and the small in soul scarce do live.
One generous feeling, one great thought, one deed
Of good, ere night would make life longer seem
Than if each year might number a thousand days,
Spent as is this by nations of mankind.
We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
In feelings; not in figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart-throbs, He most lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.
Life's but a means unto an end; that end,
To those who dwell in Him, He most in them,
Beginning, mean and end to all things, God.
The dead have all the glory of the world.

Why will we live, and not be glorious ?
 We never can be deathless till we die.
 It is the dead win battles ; and the breath
 Of those who through the world drive like a wedge
 Tearing earth's empires up, nears death so close,
 It dims his well-worn scythe. But no ! the brave
 Die never. Being deathless, they but change
 Their country's arms, for more, their country's heart.
 Give then the dead their due ; it is they who saved us ;
 Saved us from woe and want and servitude.
 The rapid and the deep ; the fall, the gulph,
 Have likenesses in feeling, and in life ;
 And life so varied hath more loveliness
 In one day, than a creeping century
 Of sameness. But youth loves and lives on change,
 Till the soul sighs for sameness ; which at last
 Becomes variety, and takes its place.
 Yet some will last to die out thought by thought
 And power by power, and limb of mind by limb,
 Like lamps upon a gay device of glass,
 Till all of soul that's left be dark and dry ;
 Till even the burden of some ninety years
 Hath crashed into them like a rock ; shattered
 Their system, as if ninety suns had rushed
 To ruin earth, or heaven had rained its stars ;
 Till they become, like scrolls, unreadable,
 Through dust and mould. Can they be cleaned and read ?
 Do human spirits wax and wane like moons ?

LUCIFER. The eye dims and the heart gets old and slow ;
 The lithe limbs stiffen, and the sun-hued locks
 Thin themselves off, or whitely wither ; still,
 Ages not spirit, even in one point,
 Immeasurably minute ; from orb to orb,
 Rising in radiance ever like the sun
 Shining upon the thousand lands of earth.
 Look at the medley, motley throng we meet ;
 Some smiling, frowning some ; their cares and joys
 Alike not worth a thought ; some sauntering slowly,
 As if destruction never could overtake them ;
 Some hurrying on, as fearing judgment swift
 Should trip the heels of death, and seize them living.

FESTUS. Grief hallows hearts even while it ages heads ;
 And much hot grief, in youth, forces up life
 With power which too soon ripens and which drops.

[*A funeral passes.*

Ah ! what is this ? A mystery sure resolved.
 I felt as fascinated towards this spot.
 Meseemed I saw a beckoning, as of bright
 Invisible hands I could not choose but follow.
 'Twas for this, doubtless.

LUCIFER. Strange coincidence !
 Is this the funeral of the fair defunct

Thou told'st me of some while, with tears ?

FESTUS. The same.

LUCIFER. Behold those three fair maiden mourners. Well, It is something, in default of other means, To leave fair friends behind one. Speak to them.

FESTUS. That were I nowise loth to do. But stay ; My heart is not an anvil ; and the blow Which grief hath struck me, needs not to be paired ; Or they might breed for ever.

LUCIFER. Speak to them.

FESTUS. Why, yes, I'll speak to them ; I know them all, As they know her they follow. Yet, methinks, All knowing, to ask curiously seems ill.

LUCIFER. To learn what others know seems only well.

FESTUS. Whose funeral is this ye follow, friends ?

LUCIFER. Would ye have grief, let me come. I am woe.

MOURNER. We want no grief, Festus ! she died of grief.

FESTUS. Said'st thou she died ? Oh, then, I knew her.

MOURNER. True.

FESTUS. Set down the body ; I would look yet on her. Not lovelier now than ever, only not. And garlanded, as for bridal.

MOURNER. True. What then ?

Say not thou knew'st not, thou, this crownèd maid, Willed as death's bride, not thine, to be thus interred.

FESTUS. Her hopes knew I too well. Oh, no ! I nought Deny. I am doomed too many to offend, To prove the end of. Not the less, let be. When died she ?

MOURNER. But the o'er-last night when the sun His purple sea-couch pressed, and high in air Heaven glorified itself with every hue The world holds loveliest. 'Twas to those who watched That death-bed as if nature yearned to express By all tints gorgeousest her inmost joy To know this soul's reunion with its God.

FESTUS. I mind the hour, the moment. 'Twas the breath As of a thousand lilies, witness pure Of her spirit's sanctity, lingering by this bier, Still, compassed me unconscious of the event, And marvelling of the miracle. Let me look !

MOURNER. In sooth, a piteous sight.

FESTUS. A heavenly sight !

Now, sons of God, what do ye now in heaven, While one so fair, so good, lies earthening here ? Why not translate these holy relics hence To your unperishing precincts, to be shrined There fitliest ; or reanimate these as once ? I will give up the future for the passed ; The winged spirit and the starry home, Would heaven but let her live, and make me love.

CLARA. I feel as though her spirit hovered near :

Holy and pure, it wafts me with its wings.

ELISSA. Their shadows strike across me. Let us move.
Friends wait us sorrowing where, hard by, her sires
Sleep in the marbled minster.

FESTUS. Heed them not;
Our duty, this day, waits on destiny. Stay.

LUCIFER. Canst thou not spare to these her sister friends,
Whose eyes with grief's salt baptism run o'er;
And who, like mourning starlets, weep the end
Of their once brightest, one consoling word?

FESTUS. Their solace mine; her, sometime, to rejoin.
Were ye not with her when she died?

HELEN. We were.
She left us a bequest I dared not then

Accept, nor now name, which from our torn hearts
A promise drew, as steel magnetic draws
Stilly, from out a wound the painful speck.
Sometime thou may'st be told; not now; not here.

FESTUS. For me to know might haply both console.

CLARA. But never wilt thou know it from my lips.

HELEN. She bade all cherish thee for her dear sake
And gave thee her forgiveness.

FESTUS. Shade divine!
Spirit immortal and immaculate, hear!
Speak!

ELISSA. What! Art mad? Wouldst have a spirit here;
And in the day's broad eye?

LUCIFER. Why not?

ELISSA. Grant, heaven!
I only swoon.

FESTUS. Swoon not, but brace thy heart
To its true tension. It may have yet to bear
Unheard-of woes. Speak, spirit, that our poor ears
May grow rich treasures of thy golden words.

ELISSA. Nay, wish not back from her paternal heavens
The pure ghost, self-congratulative ere now,
Of its translated life.

FESTUS. She comes no more,

CLARA. Nor would she, save by night, when her fair feet,
Threading the shiny mazes of the stars,
May bring us helpful hope, by grace divine;
Or us perchance premonish.

LUCIFER. Voice is none.

FESTUS. No, all is still; and still right well I know,
If aught behoves me learn by token, dream,
Vision, or sign, or visitation, I
Shall learn it; and like truly do ye know,
Ye heedful, faithful, faultless few, her friends,
Where'er her spirit dwells, she dwells in full
Regality of nature; crowned with power,
With purity clothed and girt with grace. Her air
Was an immortal's always. I have seen

Stars look upon't kinwise, with sympathy.

MOURNER. She was a love-gift heaven once gave to earth,
And took again, because unworthy of her.

FESTUS. And will ye gaze again upon her face?
Draw nigh. But kneel the majesty of death.

HELEN. Speak, thou beloved sister of my heart!
Death shall be loyal to thee; nought shall change
Thy form's marmoreal loveliness. All truth
Thou holdest now, all knowledge. Speak to us!

CLARA. No: she is silent in the hand of death;
Soothed by his touch perchance, like a young bird,
Dreadless; incredulous of cruel fate.

FESTUS. Soul of my spirit!

CLARA. Oh, ne'er could she have dreamed
This wrong from thee!

FESTUS. This wrong! Hear, Clara, thou
Whose name stands first in memory, even ere hers,
Nor know I when I loved not thee.

CLARA. Be dumb.
Never until we have mourned for mourning ceased,
Shall hope herself have hope to exculpate one,
Would dim thy name, sweet spirit, with even a plaint.
Thou didst but dip thy wing in life's dark stream,
And then away. We, wondering, watched thee whilst.

ELISSA. How hath the white rose conquered on this cheek!
This fair and final field of death and life.
Life is no match for death, since thou art fled;
The balance of existence is no more.

Let us begone, where thou art gone, to heaven.

MOURNER. And yet we weep thee, weep thee, all of us,

FESTUS. How could I be so cruel? Who but I?
O faithful as the moon-crowned night to heaven,
In pure recurrent beauty, is then this
Saddest of trysts our last; or do we yet
Meet in the far-off future?

LUCIFER. Much depends.

ELISSA. And is there no remorse?

CLARA. No blame?

HELEN. No wrong?

FESTUS. Why are ye troubled thus, and your clear souls
Made for a moment turbid? Can ye grieve
As I grieve; ye, as I be wretched? No!
But though it claim no pre-established course,
Yet give a torrent place; 'twere wise; 'twere wise.

MOURNER. The moment after thou desertedst her,
A cloud came over the prospect of her life;
And I foresaw how evening would set in,
Early, and dark and deadly. She was true.

FESTUS. Did I not love thee, too? pure perfect thing;
This is a soul I see and not a body.
Go, beauty, rest for aye; go, starry eyes,
And lips like rose-buds peeping out of snow;

Go, breast love-filled as a boat's sail with wind,
 Leaping from wave to wave, as leaps a child
 Thoughtless, o'er grassy graves ; go, looks which have
 The golden embrownment of a lion's eye.
 Yet one more look ; farewell and fair !
 All who but loved thee shall be deathless ; nought
 Named, if with thee, can perish. Thou and death
 Have made each other purer, lovelier seem,
 Like snow and moonlight. Never more for thee
 Let eyes be swollen, like streams with latter rains.
 To die were rapture, having lived with thee.
 Thy soul hath passed out of a bodily heaven
 Into a spiritual. Rest ! pure after love ;
 In love pure ; pure before. The dead are holy.
 I would I were among them.

ELISSA. Let us hence.

FESTUS. Nay, not so soon shalt thou unbless mine eyes.
 I turn, and turn, to tread the round of fate,
 As worshippers of old their templed tombs ;
 And lo ! thy tomb, thy temple is my heart.

CLARA. She is no more in man's hand ; but in God's.

FESTUS. So young, so lovely, so adored. Thy years
 The moon's sweet cycle scarce had run ; and now,
 Oh ! recommence in heaven thy dateless course.
 Our souls were so, so delicately attuned,
 A scarce discernible discord, a lapsed word,
 An inconsiderate eye-glance, thrilled through both,
 With well-nigh fatal jar. But here, this hour,
 What is there I'd not give, again to know
 That bosom's lightest swell, which once, 'gainst mine,
 For pardon craved, or granted, a mere thought,
 Beat like the billows of the sea of life ?
 And now corruption, come ; sit, sate thyself.
 This is thy choicest revel. Thou hast been
 Mine only, if my happier rival, thou
 Who takest love from the living ; life from beauty ;
 Beauty from death ; whole robber of the world.

HELEN. Oh, heaven is happier, now that thou art there,
 Sweetest of human spirits ; and for us
 Enough, the blessing to have known thee here.

FESTUS. It is so. All life's blessings, hope and peace ;
 And innocence of youth's prime, seem sweeping past,
 As with the footfall of a cataract,
 Deathwards, precipitately ; and, fled with these,
 Thou, happy spirit, serene, seraphic ! Yes !
 Thou, too, art gone. Upon thy brow, no more
 Fair seer of lucent eye shall see ray forth
 The inborn crownlet ; crown of light, or fire,
 All wear, all work, unweeting, for themselves ;
 Dew-bright was thine. Closed are thine eyes for aye.
 Those deep dark jets of light ; that pearly hand,
 Gifted with whitest witchery to convoke

Pure beings that oft beset our sunshot path,
 Gleams with the seal of power no more. No more
 The star-throned rulers of the spheral heavens
 Obey thy bidding here. On other shores
 The kings of thought salute thee. Thou hast passed
 The river of judgment; and the saintly land
 Of the elect immortals guests thee now.
 Wait thou awhile to welcome me : not long ;
 For thought's substantive shadows, things create
 Of our own mind vivific, me forewarn,
 Like eastern slaves, lip-fingered, menacing mutes ;
 Death is at hand. O injudicious judge !
 Justice unjust ; what though the world must die,
 Was this her time ? What more can time unrol ?
 Can life replevy upon the house of death ?
 Can truth unteach the promise of the passed ?
 Can earth remass the wealth of worship thou
 Outpouredst at my feet, more than numb age,
 That feast of lips, that banquet of the breast,
 Which Paradisal youth yields yet to all ?
 No ! thou art gone. Oh, never till the hour
 When the great Gatherer, with his spirit hand,
 Hath culled the ripe worlds from the tree of life,
 Shall, sunlike, set in its illumined grave,
 Another head, sacred as thine. Farewell,
 Thou fair perfection of the universe ;
 I turn to thee, the prayer-point of my soul ;
 And swear, by all the hopes I have of death,
 I had more prized all wretchedness with thee,
 Than joy with others. Fate, fulfil thy scheme.
 Demand thy fee. There's nought worth reckoning left.
 The fair configurations of my life
 Are passed away. Lingers alone in air
 One pale malignant star ; that star, mine own.

LUCIFER. Oh, we'll think better sometime of our stars,
 Myself, by fits, feel faintly saturnine ;
 Given to low spirits, and so forth. But have care,
 Or thou wilt drain these lovely eyes of tears
 That may be wanted yet.

FESTUS. This in thine ear.
 Blood is more easily shed than tears, by men ;
 And I would spare some heart-drops from their fount,
 When every drop were worth a year of life,
 Rather than now these glittering traitors fell.
 But not less be thou silent. Let these weep.
 It is well that I have mingled tears with theirs.
 Fair Eden's rivers had one only head,
 And flowed into one outfall : our great dole,
 Like vent. And now though I wander round the world,
 Each step but brings me nearer to the grave ;
 Her grave.

ELISSA. Perchance, there, we may meet again

LUCIFER. Lovely lamenters ! We again will meet.

FESTUS. Peace, soulless spirit.

LUCIFER. Peace is all I ask.

FESTUS. Let us rejoice for her ; for ourselves mourn
Wholly and separately. Art thou, say, blithe ?

Remember whom we grieve for now ; art sad ?

Reflect that she is bliss. Mere happiness

Is of ourselves ; but blessedness, of God.

And so, rejoice, fair mourners, and farewell.

LUCIFER. O ignorance sublime ! O innocence !

What would I risk to know ye, and believe !

FESTUS. Behold them slowly westering on their way,
Like those bright lights that head heaven's starry bier.

LUCIFER. Each hath a special grace.

FESTUS. But as I live—

LUCIFER. Come, that is cheering ; not a minute since
At the last gasp I deemed thee.

FESTUS. I marked not
Their several charms, opponent or in trine.

LUCIFER. Thou shalt love all at will.

FESTUS. I hear thee not.
Suffer my silence. One thing seems. Henceforth
I have a love on earth and one in heaven.

LUCIFER. That I misdoubt not. This is somewhat dull,
There is a mean with him as all : and now,
Ere my free promises too soon condense
Into more gross utilities, it were well
I from this sacred and supernal love

His heart should alienate ; and, time by time,

With some calm passion, or—I have them yet

Before me in mine eye, with rival fair

Not frivolous, oh no, spiritual, scarce less

Serious this next than her late canonized ;

More provident of the future, may be, vowed

To active piety more,—assort him, till

Aweary of all these animate ice-maidens

Dolorous, he seek life's luxuries, in despair,

And youth's gay converse ; shallow joys, but still

Quite deep enough to drown. I'll think on't.

FESTUS. Hope !
Where dwells she ?

LUCIFER. Hope ? In dreamland. Sometime soon
Or never, at the furthest, we'll hie thither.

I have seen her house by moonlight, travelling once

Nigh Ouranus sixth satellite. Much I fear

It is mostly moonshine there, by tremulous wastes

Of darkness intervalled. Sweet spot, Hope's home !

Grounds ? What it stands on, true ; but everywhere

Vast outlooks. All well fenced about with towers,

Planned to reach heaven, but failing that, doubt not

They touch the feet of clouds. Her closeless gates

No janitor haunts, suspicious, souring air

With his writhed countenance ; fact, to me, who own
A key that opens walls, let alone doors,
Less than to some momentous. Strange to note,
The house will show all sizes ; now a dwarf
Might fork it ; now 'twould guest a giant.

FESTUS. Good.

Perhaps we both may lodge there some fine day.

LUCIFER. But in the meanwhile more substantial ends
Will better suit us. Life hath claims on thee.

FESTUS. Living is but a habit ; and I mean
To break myself of it soon.

LUCIFER. Too soon thou canst not,
When that is preappointed stands achieved.
Meantime I half think with thee ; and much grieve
Men heed not of the day, how nigh none knows,
Which brings the consummation of the world.
But in mine ear the old machine already
Begins to grate. They would not credit warning,
Or I would up and cry, repent ! I will.
Here's a fair gathering and I feel moved.
Mortals, repent ! the world is nigh to its end ;
On its last legs, and desperately sick.
See ye not how it reels round all day long ?

BOYS. Oh ; here's a ranter. Come, here's fun. Amen.
I know the church service by heart.

BYSTANDER. Be off !
You'll serve the church by keeping out of it.

LUCIFER. I am a preacher come to tell ye truth.
I tell ye too there is no time to be lost ;
So fold your souls up neatly, while ye may ;
Direct to God in heaven ; or some one else
May seize them, seal them, send them—you know where.
The world must end. I weep to think of it.
But you, you laugh ! I knew ye would. I know
Men never will be wise till they are fools
For ever. Laugh away ! The time will come,
When tears of fire are trickling from your eyes,
You will blame yourselves for having laughed at me.
I warn ye, men : prepare ; repent ; be saved.
I warn ye, not because I love, but know ye.
God will dissolve the world, as she of old
Her pearl, within his cup, and swallow ye
In wrath : although to taste ye would be poison,
And death and suicide to aught but God.
Again I warn ye. Save himself who can !
Do ye not oft begin to seek salvation ?
You ? you ? and fail, as oft, to find ? Sink ? Cease ?
And shall I tell ye, brethren, why ye fail
Once and for ever ? why, there is no passed ;
And the future is the fiction of a fiction ;
The present moment is eternity.
It is that ye have sucked corruption from the world.

Like milk from your own mothers ; it is in
 Your soul-blood and your soul-bones. Scarcely earth,
 Out of a thousand sons, weans one to heaven.
 Beginnings are alike : it is ends which differ.
 One drop falls, lasts, and dries up, but a drop ;
 Another begins a river : and one thought
 Settles a life, an immortality :
 And that one thought ye will not take to good.
 Now will I tell ye just one other truth :
 Ye hate the truth as snails salt, it dissolves ye,
 Body and soul ; but I don't mind. So, now :
 Up to this moment ye are all, each, what ?
 Suppose I leave you to infer. 'Twill be
 The same, we know, the next day—and the next :
 Till some fine morning, ye will wake in fire.
 Observe, I mince not, I, the truth for ye.
 Belike you think your lives will dribble out,
 As brooks in summer dry up. Let us see !
 Try ; dike them up ; they stagnate ; thicken ; scum.
 That would make life worse than death. Well, let go !
 Where are ye then ? for life, like water, will
 Find its last level ; what level ? The grave.
 It is but a fall of five feet after all ;
 That cannot hurt ye ; it is but just enough
 To work the wheel of life ; so work away !
 Ye may think that I do not know the terms
 And treasures whereupon ye live so high.
 But I know more than most men, modestly
 Speaking. I know I am lost, you too I fear.
 Could God, save by destroying me, me save,
 I oft-times ask myself, self-tormenting. So,
 With none advantage over you, I have thought
 Rather ye might, perhaps, the freelier bear
 One in your own state to advise for ye.
 Now don't you envy me, good folks, I pray ;
 Envy's a coal comes hissing hot from hell.
 'Twill be such coals will burn ye, by the way.
 Your other preachers first think they are safe.
 Then run they to and fro to serve ye ; slave,
 Slay themselves well nigh ; sweating like a bone
 Unburied, away. I, too, for your sakes.
 But I, alas ! boast no such perfectness.
 Nay, I say broadly I am the worst among ye ;
 And God knows I have no need to wrong myself,
 Nor you. I boast not of it, but as truth ;
 It is little to be proud of, credit me.
 What is salvation ? What is safety ? Think !
 Who wants to know ? Does any ?

THE CROWD.

All of us.

LUCIFER. Then I will not tell ye. You shall wait until
 Some angel come and stir your stagnant souls ;
 Then plunge into yourselves, and rise redeemed.

Oh ! but say you, we are redeemed, long since,
 Our faults condoned, debts cancelled, all. God ran
 One winter eve, the yuletide holidays,
 His pen right down the black accout, choke full
 Of columned figures, row on row, and smiled ;
 Passed your poor pot-hooks palliative of play ;
 Your sham excuses of mistaken feasts ;
 Sick headaches, paltry truantries, what not ?
 And ticked off all, bills, extras, dues, as paid.
 So ye are new men, you ; most, at least. Look to it ?
 But don't take rights for granted ; nor all said
 Of gospel, gospel : nor because one dies,
 How miserably defunct you would fain not know,
 But a would-be friend, and leaves you all he had,
 His charity, think you e'er forsooth must live
 In lack-nought ease, and unconditioned joy.
 There's not much logic, I can tell ye, there.

A VOICE. You look quite fresh from college. Who's your coach ?
 Do spend your long vacation here.

LUCIFER. Our term's
 Not yet quite over. Make the most of chance.
 Think, lucky for your sakes I'm here. But here
 Nought tempts my stay. You are unjust. Could I see
 One hoisted for my offence, nor cry, Let go !
 I did it : punish me ? Indeed not, I.
 Play fair, now : don't be always crying " Kings !"
 And think to sneak, unnoted, to the goal.
 Some odd day, mark me, you'll be caught ; and then—
 Why then, so much precisely as you have shirked
 Your proper share, you'll earn worse buffetings,
 Quit your own forfeits. Sin like demi-gods,
 If sin ye will ; but pay your scot, like men.
 Don't run up a huge score, and leave a friend,
 A mere acquaintance, rather, of whose name
 You have taken advantage, to pay for you. Tush !
 You know heaven's terms, and right and wrong, both know
 As well as up and down, or north and south.
 Heed, then, which way you wend. If that way, sure
 You will one day knock the pole. Don't say, you thought
 It only led to Babylon ; led to Rome ;
 Geneva, Jericho, or where not ? please don't.
 I hate such wriggling fibs. Due north, the pole !
 Sin leads, as straight,—make no mistake,—to hell.
 Well, come ; you never held that you were saints ;
 Not even angels, fallen or otherwise ;
 But, reckoned generally, the race looks up.
 You improve, you'll swear : advance ; march ; grow less bad ;
 Less fatuous, less ferocious, every day ;
 Grind out old flaws in ye ; don't, you say, as once,
 Roast all who differ from you. Good, but listen.
 As when some shore-bred urchin, spit o' the brine,
 Hatched just above high-watermark, first quits

His boulder-cumber'd beach, to earn hard bread
 From harder hands ; and eyes, as slips the coast
 From sight, cliff, jetty, his dad's nets, and cot ;
 And, last thing marked, the out-beetling village crag,
 Capped,—no, not quite,—with granate toad, or eft
 Hugeous, that creeps, creeps, but ne'er crowns the top ;
 Or stone-struck hag, still irritable, her spell
 Tempestuous muttering o'er rock-chaldron ; years,
 Long years lapsed, he returns : within himself
 All changed ; enriched, mature ; and nearing, views,
 Through something bitterer than the blinding spray,
 Or is't a sudden spume-drift blurs his sight ?
 The unbettered spot :—a few deciduous huts,
 Replaced by sundry of like leaf ; the same,
 Surely the same, wild tangled knot of brats,
 Sun-coiffed, sand-shod ; one missing, who ? the same
 Witch-pot, that never boils, nor will, till earth
 Spouts up again her molten slag ; the same
 Unspeakable monster scaling aye the height
 It fails, footstalled, to reach. So you ; you are,
 Just what you were, just where, as once when I
 First saw ye forty years since ; and next week,
 Or fifty centuries hence, 'twould be all one.
 You are quite the same, in bulk ; a trivial law,
 A surface custom varied, here, as there
 A moss-patch more, or less ; but oh ! the back
 O' the creature ; oh, the fissurous grin ; the crawl ;
 Identic ; unmistakable. Zounds ! I know ye.

THE CROWD. And if ye know, what then ?

LUCIFER.

Why, I'll not say.

Come, I'll unroll your hearts and read them to ye.
 'Tis a long strip, Death's ritual. Hear not less.
 To say ye live is but to say ye have souls,
 That ye have paid for them and mean to play them,
 Till some brave pleasure wins the golden stake,
 And rakes it up to death, as to a bank.
 Ye live and die on what your souls will fetch ;
 And all are of different prices ; therefore hell
 Cannot well bargain for mankind in gross ;
 But each soul must be purchased, one by one.
 This it is makes men rate themselves so high :
 While truly ye are worth little ; but to God,
 Ye are worth more than to yourselves. By sin
 Ye wreak your spite against God ; that ye know ;
 And knowing, will it. But I pray, I beg.
 Act with some smack of justice to your Maker,
 If not unto yourselves. Do ! It is enough
 To make the very Devil chide mankind ;
 Such baseness, such unthankfulness ! Why he
 Thanks God he is no worse. You don't do that.
 I say be just to God. Leave off these airs :
 Know your place ; speak to God ; and say, for once.

Go first, Lord ; take your finger off your eye.
 It blocks the universe and God from sight.
 Think ye your souls are worth nothing to God ?
 Are they so small ? What can be great with God ?
 The sun and moon he wears on either arm,
 Seals of his sovereignty. What now, huge men !
 What will ye weigh against the Lord ? Yourselves ?
 Bring out your balance : get in, man by man :
 Add earth, heaven, hell, the universe ; that's all.
 God puts his finger in the other scale,
 And up we bounce, a bubble. Nought is great
 Nor small, with God ; for none but he can make
 The atom imperceptible, and none
 But he can make a world : he counts the orbs,
 He counts the atoms of the universe,
 And makes both equal ; both are infinite.
 Giving God honour, never underrate
 Yourselves : after him ye are everything.
 But mind ! God's more than everything ; he is God.
 And what of me ? No, us ? no ! I mean the Devil ?
 Why see ye not he goes before both you
 And God ? Men say, as proud as Lucifer ;
 Pray who would not be proud with such a train ?
 Hath he not all the honour of the earth ?
 Why Mammon sits before a million hearths,
 Where God is bolted out from every house.
 He'll not forget that. Some day there'll be haply,
 A pretty general eviction. Then,
 Mind me, he'll break your bars and burst your doors,
 Which slammed against him once, and turn ye out,
 Roofless and shivering, 'neath the doom-storm ; heaven
 Shall crack above ye like a bell in fire,
 And bury all beneath its shining shards.
 He calls, ye hear not ! Lo ! he comes—ye see not.
 No ; ye are deaf as a dead adder's ear :
 No ; ye are blind as never bat was blind,
 With a burning, bloodshot blindness of the heart :
 A swimming, swollen, senselessness of soul.
 Listen. Whom love ye most ? Why, him to whom
 Ye in your turn are dearest. Need I name ?
 Oh no ! But all are devils to themselves ;
 And every man his own great foe. Hell gets
 Only the gleanings ; earth hath the full wain ;
 And hell is merry at its harvest home.
 But ye are generous to sin, and grudge
 The gleaners nothing ; ask them, push them in.
 Let not an ear, a grain of sin be lost ;
 Gather it, grind it up ; it is our bread ;
 We should be ashamed to waste the gifts of God.
 Why is the world so mad ? Why runs it thus
 Raving and howling round the universe !
 Because the Devil bit it from the birth !

The fault is all with him. Fear nothing, friends ;
 It is fear which beds the far to-come with fire,
 As the sun does the west : but the sun sets ;
 Well : still ye tremble—tremble, first at light,
 Then darkness. Tremble ! ye dare not believe.
 No, cowards ! sooner than believe ye would die ;
 Die with the black lie flapping on your lips,
 Like the soot-flake upon a burning bar.
 Be merry, happy if ye can : think never
 Of him who slays your souls nor him who saves.
 There is time enough for that when ye are a-dying.
 Keep your old ways ; it matters not this once.
 Be brave ; ye are not men whom meat and wine
 Serve to remind but of the sacrament ;
 To whom sweet shapes and tantalizing smiles
 Bring up the Devil and the ten commandments ;
 And so on. But I said the world must end.
 I see some old men 'mong ye, and they know,
 Discomfortably enough, the heart in age.
 Lower and lower, like the wintering sun,
 Sets daily, and is troubled more to rise.
 Let them be rather gay to miss earth's end.
 I am sorry ; it is such a pleasant world ;
 With all its faults it is perfect—to a fault ;
 And you, of course, end with it. Now how long
 Will the world take to die ? I know ye place
 Great faith upon death-bed repentances ;
 The suddener the better. I know ye often
 Begin to think of praying and repenting ;
 But second thoughts come, and ye are worse than ever ;
 As over new white snow a filthy thaw.
 Ye do amaze me verily. How long
 Will ye take heart on your own wickedness,
 And God's forbearance ? Have ye cast it up ?
 Come, now ; the year, and month, day, hour, and minute,
 Sin's golden cycle ? Know ye, pray, how long
 Exactly, heaven will grant ye ; how long God,
 Who when he had slain the world and wasted it,
 Hung up his bow in heaven, as in his hall
 A warrior after battle, will yet bear
 Your contumely and scorn of his best gifts ;
 Man's mockery of man ? But never mind !
 Some of us are magnificently good,
 And hold the head up high, like a giraffe :
 You, in particular, and you ; and you.
 Good men are here and there, I know ; but then
 You must excuse me if I mention this,
 My duty is to tell it you ; the world,
 Like a black block of marble, jagged with white,
 As with a vein of lightning petrified,
 Looks blacker than without such ; looks, in truth,
 So gross the heathen, gross the Christian too,

Like the original darkness of void space,
 Hardened. Instead of justice, love, and grace,
 Each worth to man the mission of a God,
 Injustice, hate, uncharitableness,
 Triequal reign round earth, hell's trinity, sure.
 Ye think ye never can be bad enough ;
 Nay, as ye sink in sin ye rise in hope.
 And let the worst come to the worst, you say,
 There always will be time to turn ourselves,
 And cry for half an hour or so, to God :
 Salvation, sure, is not so very hard ;
 It need not take one long ; and half an hour
 Is quite as much as we can spare for it.
 We have no time for pleasures. Business ! business !
 No ! ye shall perish suddenly and unsaved.
 The world shall stand still with a rending jar,
 As though it struck at sea ; or, as when once,
 An arm Titanian, say not whose, but jogged
 By earthquakes, wryed the pole, and o'er the dry
 Poured competitive mains. The unsleepful sea,
 Moaning and bellowing now round caverned coasts ;
 Now, drawing hard through thirty thousand teeth,
 Upon the shingly shore, his pauseful breath,
 Like some monogamous monster which hath lost,
 Poor fool ! his mate ; and every rock-hole searched
 By torch of foam-light, dogs her steps with sad,
 Superfluous faithfulness, shall rest at last,
 Nor wist which way to turn him ; ebb nor flow
 No more to choose. All elements as though smote
 With reasonablest disloyalty to man's
 Usurpful claim, their constrained suit shall cease,
 And natural service ; men their mightiest wont,
 Their meanest use and craft. The halls where parle
 The heads of nations, shall be dumb with death.
 The priest shall dipping, die ; can man save man ?
 Is water God ? The counsellor, wise fool,
 Drop down amid his quirks and sacred lies,
 The judge, while dooming unto death some wretch,
 Shall meet at once his own death, doom and judge.
 The doctor, watch in hand and patient's pulse,
 Shall feel his own heart cease its beats, and fall.
 Professors shall spin out, and students strain
 Their brains no more. Art, science, toil, shall cease,
 Commerce. The ship shall her own plummet seek,
 And sound the sea herself and depths of death.
 At the first turn, Death shall cut off the thief,
 And dash the gold-bag in his yellow brain.
 The gambler, reckoning gains, shall drop a piece :
 Stoop down, and there see death ; look up, there God.
 The wanton, temporising with decay,
 And qualifying every line which vice
 Writes bluntly on the brow, inviting scorn,

Shall pale through plastered red ; and the loose low sot
 See clear, for once, through his misty, o'erbrimmed eye.
 The just, if there be any, die in prayer.
 Death shall be everywhere among your marts ;
 And giving bills which no man may decline,
 Drafts upon hell one moment after date.
 Then shall your outcries tremble amid the stars :
 Terrors shall be about ye like a wind ;
 And fears fall down upon ye like four walls.

FESTUS. Yon man looks frightened.

LUCIFER.

Then it is time to stop.

I hope I have done no good. He will soon forget
 His soul. Flesh soaks it up, as sponge does water.

THE CROWD. He's a mad ranter ; down with him.

FESTUS.

Let him be !

LUCIFER. Stand by me, Festus ! and I will by thee.
 Said I not what they were ? When am I wrong ?
 Why, heaven and earth ! this is the second time
 I have run for my life.

FESTUS.

Nay, nay, come back ! I'll see

These rustics harm thee not : they would chair thee round
 The market-place, knew they but whom thou art.
 I'll make it mine to soothe them for a space.
 Peace, there, my friends ! one minute ; let us pray.
 Grant us, O God ; that in thy holy love
 The universal people of the world
 May grow more great and happy every day ;
 Mightier, wiser, humbler, too, towards thee.
 And that all ranks, all classes, callings, states
 Of life, so far as such seem right to thee,
 May mingle into one, like sister trees,
 And so in one stem flourish ; that all laws
 And powers of government be based and used
 In good, and for the people's sake ; that each
 May feel himself of consequence to all,
 And act as though all saw him ; that the whole,
 The mass of every nation, may so do
 As is most worthy of the next to God ;
 For a whole people's souls, each one worth more
 Than a mere world of matter, make, combined,
 A something godlike, something like to thee.
 We pray thee for the welfare of all men.
 Let monarchs who love truth and freedom feel
 The happiness of safety, and respect
 From those they rule, and guardianship from thee
 Let them remember they are set on thrones
 As representatives, not as substitutes,
 Of nations, to implead with God and man.
 Let tyrants who hate truth, or fear the free,
 Know that to rule in slavery and error,
 For the mere ends of personal pomp and power,
 Is such a sin as doth deserve a hell

To itself sole. Let both remember, Lord !
 They are but things like-natured with all nations ;
 That mountains issue out of plains, and not
 Plains out of mountains, and so likewise kings
 Are of the people, not the people of kings.
 And let all feel, the rulers and the ruled,
 All classes and all countries, that the world
 Is thy great halidom ; that thou art king,
 Lord, only owner and possessor. Grant
 That nations may now see, it is not kings,
 Nor priests, they need fear so much as themselves ;
 That if they keep but true to themselves, and free
 Sober, enlightened, godly ; mortal men
 Become impassible as air ; one great
 And indestructible substance as the sea.
 Let all on thrones and judgment-seats reflect
 How dreadful thy revenge through nations is
 On those who wrong them ; but do thou grant, Lord,
 When wrong shall be redressed, such change be wrought,
 With clemency judicial, not with hate,
 Nor criminous violence, whereby one wrong
 Translates another ; both to thee abhorrent,
 The bells of time are ringing changes fast.
 Grant, Lord ! that each fresh peal may usher in
 An era of advancement ; that each change
 Prove an effectual, lasting, happy gain.
 And we beseech thee, overrule, O God !
 All civil contests to the good of all ;
 All party and religious differences
 To honourable ends, whether secured
 Or lost ; and let all strife, political
 Or social, spring from conscientious aims,
 And have a generous, self-ennobling end,
 Man's good, and thine own glory in view always.
 The best may then fail, and the worst succeed,
 Alike with honour. We beseech thee, Lord !
 For bodily strength, but more especially
 For the soul's health and safety. We entreat thee
 In thy great mercy to decrease our wants,
 And add autumnal increase to the comforts
 Which tend to keep men innocent, and load
 Their hearts with thanks to thee, as trees in bearing ;
 The blessings of friends, families and homes,
 And kindnesses of kindred. And we pray
 That men may rule themselves in faith in God
 In charity to each other, and in hope
 Of their own soul's salvation : that the mass,
 The millions in all nations, may be trained,
 From their youth upwards, in a nobler mode,
 To loftier and more liberal ends. We pray
 Above all things, Lord ! that all men be free
 From bondage, whether of the mind or body ;

The bondage of religious bigotry,
 And bald antiquity ; servility
 Of thought or speech to rank and power ; be all
 Free as they ought to be in mind and soul,
 As well as by state-birth right ; and that Mind,
 Time's giant pupil, may right soon attain
 Majority, and speak and act for himself.
 Incline thou to our prayers, and grant, O Lord !
 That all may have enough, and some safe mean
 Of worldly goods and honours, by degrees,
 Take place, if practicable, in the fitness
 And fulness of thy time. And we beseech thee
 That truth no more be gagged, nor conscience dungeoned,
 Nor science be impeached of godlessness ;
 Nor faith be circumscribed, which as to thee,
 And the soul's self affairs, is infinite ;
 But that all men may have due liberty
 To speak an honest mind, in every land ;
 Encouragement to study, leave to act
 As conscience orders. We entreat thee, Lord ;
 For man, thy son's divine humanity's sake,
 With all his faults and errors total man's,
 In whose cause all thy prophets, from the first
 Speak, to this last, to take away reproach
 Of all kinds from thy church ; and all temptation
 Of pomp or power political, that none
 May err in the end wherefor they were appointed
 To any of its orders, low or high ;
 And no ambition, of a worldly cast,
 Leaven the love of souls unto whose care
 They feel propelled by thy most holy spirit.
 Be every church established, Lord ! in truth.
 Let all who preach the word, by the word live,
 In moderate estate ; and in thy church,
 One, universal, and invisible,
 World-wards, yet manifest unto itself,
 May it seem good, dear Saviour, in thy sight,
 That orders be distinguished, not by wealth,
 But piety and power of teaching souls.
 Equalize labour, Lord ! and recompense.
 Let not a hundred humble pastors starve,
 Though true humility now and then may rein
 Power's prancing steed, and churl-born pride ride down
 Rough-shod, an innocent group, while one or two,
 Throned, mitred, palaced, banquetted, burlesque,
 With worldliest gifts, the holy penury,
 The fastings, the foot-wanderings and the preaching
 Of Christ and his first followers ; such the lot
 Mostly, thy wisdom casts for every son
 Of man, whose soul thou first regeneratest,
 To illume, with light prophetic of the heavens,
 Time's slothful generations. Wake them, Lord !

So sanctify man's science that its touch
Shall all disease cure ; so with truth sincere
Empower faith's prayer, that rightly made on terms
By heaven long since conditioned, at a word,
Bread may be given for millions at a time.
Would heaven, thou God ! might'st come again ; earth's life,
And man's race, of thy spirit reborn, renew ;
And fixed in air for aye thy cloud of peace.
War should be then no more, wrong, want, nor woe.
But till that perfect advent, grant us, Lord !
That all good institutions, orders, claims
Wisely and charitably proposed, in aid
Of social, moral betterment and mind's
World-wide conversion to the eternal truth,
On thy divine foundation built, of love
Towards fellow man, of universal peace,
And service to thee sole, may through all lands
Speed prosperous, and fit daily many a soul
Humbly to earn its restful seat in heaven :
May more of such be raised and nobly filled ;
That thy word may be taught throughout all lands ;
Thy saving spirit rejoice in all souls saved.
In virtue of that spirit we dare to name,
And by that spirit made bold, we ask for good
And peace to all who peace desire, or seek ;
We dare to pray for all that live, or die.
Man dies to man ; but all to thee, God, live.
We therefore pray thee for these dead to us,
Man's universal race, in flesh extinct ;
In spirit immortal, our forbears ; not those
Alone who died unwitting of all truth,
But whose souls opening after, like a flower
In finer air, may compass more than we ;
Not only for the sage, saint, seer of old
Who saw thy truth but darkly, felt thy light
But feebly, yet, unfaltering, held the faith,
That the good God who made all, all decrees,
Allots and blesses all, in this life, man
May trust like lovingly for life to come.
Not only for those faithful wise of yore,
But for the mass unwise of all times ; now,
Passed and to come ; who boast not of thy love,
Nor glory in thy name ; but spurn thy law,
Nor keep thy precepts ; for the wicked wight
Who hates thy righteousness ; and for the good
Who his own preacheth ; for the scorner who
Despiseth thy humility, most high !
The ignorant who thy providence misdoubts ;
The dark inverted soul who sees not thee ;
The bigot who maligns thee, Lord ! for all,
Quick, dead, we ask thy boundless mercy, more
Than all sin, all defect, as infinite

O'erlaps all finites. But by us be none
Condemned ; save those who, self-condemned, reject
Thy law ; shall culprits take the judge's seat ?
Christ's lesson of forgiveness mote not we
Forget. If they who wrought earth's crowning crime
Were of his intercession worthy, Lord !
Of whom shall fellow-sinners, like ourselves,
Despair ? To whom shall mercy hope deny ?
And we entreat thee, that all men whom thou
Hast gifted with great minds may love thee well,
And praise thee, for their powers, and use them most
Humbly and holily, and, lever-like,
Act but in lifting up the mass of mind
About them ; knowing well that they shall be
Questioned by thee of deeds the pen hath done,
Or caused, or glozed ; inspire them with delight
And power to treat of noble themes and aims,
Worthily, and to leave things low and mean ;
Of vice and day-lived folly born, to die
Of their own native baseness ; make them know
Fine thoughts are wealth, for the right use of which
Men are and ought to be accountable ;
If not to thee, to those they influence.
Grant this, we pray thee, and that all who read,
Or utter, noble thoughts may make them theirs,
And thank God for them, to the betterment
Of their succeeding life ; that all who lead
The general sense and taste, too apt, perchance,
To be led, keep in mind the mighty good
They may achieve, and are in conscience bound,
And duty, to attempt unceasingly
To compass. Grant us, all-maintaining sire !
That all the great mechanic aids to toil
Man's skill hath formed, found, rendered, whether used
In multiplying works of mind, or aught
Life's thousand wants to obviate, may avail
Much to mankind's progressive welfare, now ;
And in all ages henceforth and for ever.
Let their effect be, Lord ! to lighten labour,
And give more room to mind ; and leave the poor
Some time for self-improvement. Let not these
Be forced to grind the bones out of their arms
For bread, but have some space to think and feel
Like moral and immortal creatures. God !
Have mercy on them till such time shall come.
Look thou with pity on all lesser crimes,
Thrust on men almost when devoured by want,
Wretchedness, ignorance, and outcast life.
Have mercy on the rich, too, who pass by
The means they hold at hand to fill their minds
With serviceable knowledge for themselves,
And fellows ; and support not the good cause

Of the world's better future. Oh, reward
 All such who do, with peace of heart, and power
 For greater good. Have mercy, Lord ! on each
 And all, for all men need it equally.
 May peace, and industry, and commerce, weld
 Into one land all nations of the world,
 Rekinning those the deluge once estranged.
 Oh ! may all help each other in good things,
 Mental and moral, and of bodily kind.
 Vouchsafe, kind God ; thy blessing to this isle,
 Specially. May our country ever lead
 The world, for she is worthiest ; and may all
 Profit by her example, and adopt
 Her course, wherever great, or free, or just.
 May all her subject colonies and powers
 Have of her freedom freely, as a child
 Receiveth of its parents. Let not rights
 Be wrested from us, to our own reproach,
 But granted. We may make the whole world free,
 And be as free ourselves as ever, more !
 If policy or self-defence call forth
 Our forces to the field, let us in thee
 First trust, and in thy name we shall o'ercome ;
 For we will only wage the righteous cause.
 Let us not conquer nations for ourselves,
 But for thee, Lord, who hast predestined us
 To fight the battles of our future age,
 Age to be then of peace, now ; and forestalled
 All meaner aims of victory ; so subdued
 All thought of barbarous glory gained by blood
 Shed, to have done with war before thou comest,
 Or thy dread whisper through the o'erconscious earth
 Thrilled, stuns all living, and makes live the dead.
 Till then, Lord God of armies, not of stars
 Only, which midst obstructive darkness, man
 Their luminous forts, and so establish Light's
 Dynastic order, self equate with space,
 But wheresoe'er law is ; we, aiming, Lord !
 Like force of moral rule, and mental truth,
 And soul-enlightening knowledge, to maintain
 'Gainst freedom's foes, and ignorance, tool and dupe
 Of warful tyranny ; let our foes if such,
 Foes too of marching manhood, before ours
 Have their swords broken, and their cannon burst,
 And their strong cities levelled ; and while we
 War faithfully and righteously, to raise,
 Make free the peoples we subject and train
 To self-dominion ; dower with law our faith ;
 Civilise, humanize the lands we win
 From savage or from nature, every soul
 Taught truthfully to know thee ; thou, O God !
 Wilt aid and hallow conquest, as of old

Thine own immediate nation's, when it spoiled
 At thy command, the idolatrous realms of earth
 And sacrilegious lands of unbeing gods.
 It may be yet some world-dividing war
 For liberty 'gainst despotry, for truth
 'Gainst falsehood, virtue against vice, shall ask
 And task our forces. But 'fore all we pray
 That all mankind may make one brotherhood,
 And love and serve each other; that all wars
 And feuds die out of nations; whether those
 Whom the sun's hot light darkens, or ourselves
 Whom he treats fairly, or the northern tribes
 Whom ceaseless snows and starry winters blench;
 Savage or civilised, let every race
 Red, black, or white, olive, or tawny-skinned,
 Settle in peace and swell the gathering hosts
 Of souls which worship peace. Oh! may the hour
 Soon come when all false gods, false creeds, false prophets,
 Allowed in thy good purpose for a time,
 Demolished, the great world shall be at last
 God's mercy-seat, the heritage of a pure
 Humanity, made divine, and the possession
 Of the spirit of comfort and wisdom; shall all be
 One land, one home, one friend, one faith, one law;
 Its ruler God, its practice righteousness,
 Its life peace. For the one true faith we pray;
 There is but one in heaven, and there shall be
 Seeing thou hast said all soul shall know thee one,
 But one on earth, the same which is in heaven.
 Prophecy is more true than history.
 Grant us our prayers, we pray, Lord! in the name
 And for the sake of universal man,
 Who thee like Saviour as Creator, holds,
 Over all worlds, one Holy Spirit, God.

THE CROWD. Amen!

LUCIFER. Well, friends, we'll sing a hymn; then part.
 I give it out, and you sing—all of you.

Oh! earth is cheating earth
 From age to age for ever;
 She laughs at faith and worth,
 And dreams she shall die never;
 Never, never, never!
 And dreams she shall die never.

And hell is cursing hell
 From age to age for ever;
 Its groans ring out the knell
 Of souls that may die never;
 Never, never, never!
 Of souls that may die never.

My blessing be upon ye all; now go!

FESTUS. Now I propose to sing another stave,
Nor with that demonish malediction end.

But heaven is blessing heaven
From age to age for ever ;
And its thanks to God are given
For bless that can die never !
Never, never, never !
For bless that can die never.

I wonder what these people make of thee.

LUCIFER. Ay, manner's a great matter.

FESTUS. They deserve

All the rebuke thou gavest them, and more.
What mountains of delusion men have reared !
How every age hath bustled on to build
Its shadowy mole—its monumental dream !
How faith and fancy, in the mind of man,
Have spuriously immingled, and how much
Shall pass away for aye, as before yon sun,
Lord, he alike, of steadfastness and change,
The visionary landscapes of the skies ;
The golden capes far stretching into heaven ;
The snow-piled cloud crags ; the bright winged isles,
Which dot the deep impassive ocean air,
Like a disbanded rainbow, of all hues,
Fit for translated fairy's Paradise ;
Or as before the eye of musing child,
The faces fancy forms in clouds, or fire,
Of glowing angel, now ; now, darkening fiend's.
Arts, superstition, creeds, philosophy ; this
Called natural as material, and so deemed
Extrusive of design and God's great ends,
Have held in turn man's mind, betrayed and mocked ;
Thou, too, vain science, who wouldst level man,
And all create with God, thine hour is come ;
Thy lips were lined with the immortal lie,
And, dyed, with all the look of truth ; men saw,
Believed, embraced, detested, cast thee off.
Thou wouldst not take in vain God's name. Wouldst take
His being into thine apprehension ? No !
Those lights the morn of truth's immortal day,
As thou didst falsely swear them, have not all
Vanished, the mere auroras of an hour ?
Yet didst thou vow to gather up, clear again,
The fallen waters of humanity, smoothe
The flaw from an eye ; piece even a pounded pearl.

LUCIFER. I bet she failed.

FESTUS. Thank God, I am a man,
Not a philosopher.

LUCIFER. Of that brand, oh no :
Not a materialist. Another cast,
Science may yet succeed.

FESTUS. She never can.

Rivers may rot the root of oak fire-bolted ;
Revive it, never.

LUCIFER. True ; for once be gay.

FESTUS. Oh, let me to the hills, where none but God
Can overlook us ; for I hate to breathe
The breaths, and think the thoughts, of other men,
In close and crowded cities where the skies
Frown like an angry father, mournfully.
Oh, but I love the hills ; love loneliness,
Allwhere of desert shore, or wold scant-lived.
Where there is nothing else, there is always God.
Yes, wearied soon of borough crowds, I love
My fellows most at arm's length, not too near ;
In the mid distance, somewhat,—nature seems
A holier mediatress 'tween God and man,
Mean mightier than aught else. But when alone,
Braced by life-searching thought, and with the love
Of his creations filled, I go to meet
Heaven on the hills, my soul I feel expand
In sensefulness of Deity, and amidst
Star-mimicked snows, indigenious of the skies,
Conscious of spirit made capable to accept
Celestial hints, and in dim depths of thought,
Implunged, of God's perfections infinite,
His simple ways I muse, all kind ; him, soul
Substantial of the universe, and his ends,
Divining better from those goodliest acts
In world foundations traceable, than in tomes
Named revelative, too oft to his nature false,
His boundless bounteousness. And, wotting well,
How to be sought he loves, not only in prayer
And praise, not only in virtue helped, wrong crushed,
But for himself essential, seek betimes,
Softly and solitary, nor deem to miss
Always the spot surpriseful, where he might
Have hidden himself secretive ; there no less
Conceivably, than in columned temples ; now,
In sea-halls echoing tidal thunders, walled
With wave-scooped rock, piled mightily crag on crag,
Like masonry of gods ; in chasmy caves,
Cool, oozy, unsuspect of brangling crowds,
Where ocean oft his white steeds stalls ; impaved
With gore-dyed granite, as though God, concerned
For private weal and suffering, had in wrath
And very truth, for ravaged lands, and fields
Depopulated, some pest enorme, hide-winged,
Horn-lidded as to his eyes, trode down to death,
And drowned in his own poisonous blood, gall-greened ;
Then, 'neath earth's threshold buried, hot ;—and now
Midst woods, O awful woods, ye natural fanes,
Whose very air is holy, and we breathe
Of God ; he, while we worship, there for us.

LUCIFER. All this done leisurely, and some other things
Of like necessity, say, and a green old age
Waits sweetly both. Had I more faults than one,
My favourite failing would be found, I fear,
In fondness for society. Much beside
Mountains and groves me 'lure.

FESTUS. Ah true ; there's man,
So rich in wants.

LUCIFER. And woman, wealthier still
In that particular, seeing she wants just now,
To want her master. There are maids I know
Look to be asked for yet, ere they grow grey.

FESTUS. Oh, but I am put to the ban, this day.

LUCIFER. Let grief

Weep her eyes dry to their last tear, to-night ;
She hath a trick of brightening up, ere morn,
Would startle many a ghost, could he but wait.
Exile mayhap, who knows ? commute, our time,
With such accomplishments as I to thee
Own owed, such gifts and potencies as erst
Were promised, will be well filled up. Meanwhile
It is fit that something more were done for man,
By those who aim to benefit him, than aught
He now enjoys. Some social Paradise,
Some practicable Elysium, canst not plan,
Devise, imagine, scheme ? It is scarce my cue.

FESTUS. Long have I pondered such. But ne'er while earth's
Incongruous nations each, as now, its end
Selfish would gain by force or fraud, exists
One chance that good men's dreams be verified.
Never till peace one-minded sway the whole.

LUCIFER. The sole equality now on earth is death.
The rich have ne'er enough of everything ;
The poor have never enough of anything.
I am for judgment : that will settle all.

Nothing is to be done without destruction,
Death is the universal salt of states ;
And blood the base of all things, law and war.
Society broken up and well ground down ;
The world in short macadamised, might serve ;—
The road to hell wants mending. Come away !

FESTUS. But can such peace be attained without all war ?

LUCIFER. Think so.

FESTUS. Who lives to see were surely blessed.
And now, take note, I climb yon hills.

LUCIFER. Yon hills ?

There's no one, sure, lives there, who—

FESTUS. When shall I
Return ?

LUCIFER. I'll think. When gorse, say's, out of bloom.

VI.

Our next
 Adventure seems fair promising, for if be
 One scene in life whence evil may be ruled
 Absent, 'tis sure pure early love. But not
 Love sole, with the world untried before one's eye
 Eager to search all being, though of gross cares
 Freed, and in easefullest obscurity lapped
 Can make soul happy. Doubts of things divine,
 Generate spontaneously, or thought inborne
 By rumour of the world, as pestful seeds
 Mist sown, or of spirit in self forced fellowship
 From eviller sphere conveyed; as dominant soul
 Seer's tranced intelligence shakes, the mind distract.
 But see love's star now rise, which ere it set,
 Shall, many a mischance bettered, perfect life
 And lead to heavenward; hear of holy ends;
 Goaded into man's heart; and worth of faith.

*Lawn and Parterre—Bridge—Village Church in Distance—
 FESTUS and CLARA—Evening.*

CLARA. Time ever on the wing, an age it seems,
 Though but few moons have passed, since here we met.

FESTUS. Oh happy are those hills which long, to me,
 Showed as stern barriers, 'twixt this hapless heart,
 These hopeless feet, and joy's sojourn; but cleared
 Behold, I have found the sacred trust these guards
 Had to their vales remote, conveyed, thyself.
 And could the sight of blessedness make blessed,
 Then were I truly fortunatest of men.

As one elect by lightning, consecrate
 Deathwise to God, true chooser of the slain,
 Slain, but for ever living with life's lord.

I, gladdening in thy dear companionship,
 All do I can to exalt my soul as thine,
 To holiest ends and missions thou dost seal,
 With force persistent mine much lacks. Too oft
 There comes the doubt that palters with all faith,
 And palsies aspiration; act, nor aim,
 Nor earnest end in life, which leaves to enjoy.
 Days are to me of light when I rejoice

In earth, man, all things round, and strong belief
 Rules, as a prevalent wind the world, my mind.
 The stars instil their virtues in the schemes

I muse, so much doth generous reason joy
 In rich forecasts of full-orbed happiness;
 And the all fatherly Deity smiles. Anon,
 Come surging from afar, dark doubts like wrecks
 Of forespent storms we deemed we had done with. Wave
 On wave of darkness, like the shadowy tides
 Of that tenebrous sea which billowing breaks
 Soundless on lunar promontories, my soul

O'erfloods; nought satisfies. All ends seem mixed
 With means that make for evil; and if I see
 God's hand, it is everywhere distinct from things,
 Moulding them not, nor guiding; least of all
 The errant soul I know me.

CLARA. How! life's goods,
 Heaven's gifts, health, beauty; earth's, wealth, culture, love,
 Are means, not ends. A mind absorbed in means,
 Means but a mind that's mean, which endless errs.

FESTUS. It may be; nay, 'tis probable. Say, it's true.

CLARA. Let us do more than this. Have noblest ends,
 Ends which will bear the eye of God, nor flinch.

FESTUS. But this means strife. Why should I strive with
 men?

No ends have I to gain that man can give;
 Save one; and that not for myself, but them.

CLARA. But thou I thought hadst highest intents, and these
 It was that drew my soul to thine, resolved,
 I deemed, to head the advance of men. And now,
 Wouldst note at ease the bubble of fountains rise?
 Number the daisies on the lamb-cropped green?
 Or count the maythorn's bloomlets as they fall
 Fragrant in faery showers? Shall I attune
 Mine harpstrings, strained into their subtense beam,
 Luminous and hollow as is a golden flame,
 To songs commemorate of perfect bliss,
 Earth now enjoys; of war, of woe, extinct,
 Sin, ignorance, penury? Or, are all these
 Ills, yet to be o'ermastered?

FESTUS. These be thoughts
 Do scare the spirit that rouses them.

CLARA. May be.
 And sometimes self-love scared, is self-love cured.

FESTUS. To know the truth I seek; self-love's best aim
 Or soul's worst, know I not.

CLARA. An aim, perchance,
 Attainable, not at once; but if pursued
 With single and earnest gaze not doubtful. Men,
 By bent of spirit or dint of labouring limbs
 Only their ends gain, or their means to live,
 None other mean save inspiration is
 Which coming from above no labour asks
 Nor can be earned by merit, nor set will.

FESTUS. Perish the thought!

CLARA. And if earth's inborn strength
 Could e'er unhelped relift her to the stars
 She left; it takes a mightier hand than man's
 Soul to resphere on earth; yet could she ne'er
 By native worth claim Heaven as birthright, more
 Than man make cloudland home.

FESTUS. The inheritance
 Of soul, its birth-place, death-place may be earth.

Our present is doubt's veriest sphere. Who knows
With certainty what is?

CLARA. This know. What comes
Direct from God, his spirit, allwhere, alway,
Is deathless, tireless; working good for all,
In ways unnumbered. Souls that luxury love
And labour loathe are on their griefward way.
Nature without all effort gravitates.
Men worsen naturally. As falls a star
Earthwards, so deathwards falls the inactive soul,
Or indevote to good, Heaven's counterfoil.
Some generous thoughts thou hadst of serving man
And aiding higher causes, happier ends,
Than all the ages yet had sought, or given.

FESTUS. I had, I am cooler.

CLARA. 'Tis my grief.

FESTUS.

Enough!

Turn we to things that leave us not in the end
Inconsolable. It is joy to know the day
Is filling up with feelings that will last
Memorially, all life.

CLARA. All time, we hope.

FESTUS. Hope, and its lunes, its tides, to their very heart,
Ebbd out, with me are at dead water. Come!
Let us consider deeplier, things that be.
What happy things to wit, are youth, love, sunshine.
How sweet to feel the sun upon the heart,
And know it is lighting up the rosy blood.
How sweeter still, that sun within the soul,
The consciousness of mutual love returned,
And with all joyous feelings making shine
The dark breast, like a grot with prisms spar.
We walk among the sunbeams as with angels.

CLARA. Yes, there are feelings so serene and sweet,
Coming and going as with a musical lightness,
They more than make amends for their passingness,
And balance God's condition to decay;
As yon light fleecy cloudlet floating along,
Like golden down from some high angel's wing,
So breaks and beautifies the blue, we lose
Just reckoning of its imminent end. And love
Hath some such very semblance, or I err
At large. I wonder if ever I could love
Another. How I should start to see on the sward
A shadow not thine own, arm-linked with mine.

FESTUS. Thou art happy, I doubt not. I, if nothing else,
I have renewed my youth.

CLARA. When wert thou deemed
Aged?

FESTUS. Oh, thou know'st not then, how old I am?
Know, in my brain I hear each several age
Whose spirit I have by study absorbed, and so

Assimilated, that morally we are one.
 If not yet accurately defined my years,
 I am of full age ; I have come into mine own,
 By grief-right. Take me, peer of want and woe ;
 Proud thrall of doubt, my liege.

CLARA. Be not so sad.

FESTUS. How not be sad, whene'er the astounded mind
 A moment muses upon the future scope,
 How vast, of human woe ; to sensitive soul,
 Enquiring novice of that mapped-out state,
 Enough to make all thought of Heaven a guile.
 Here, a few blessed, who have pre-empt all joy,
 There a mass on mass, in boundless, pauseless pain,
 It shakes all thought of God, as being just.

CLARA. It shakes our trust in our own reason. Here,
 We may not know all elements of a sum,
 Untold, intangible, only partly worked,
 Unseen, be thou content with proffered heaven.

FESTUS. How trust a future so woe-weighted ?

CLARA. Trust !

See, here's a garland I have bound for thee,
 Let me but twine it round thy brow. There, know,
 Many be kings of men ; rule but thyself,
 Thou art king of man.

FESTUS. The augury I accept.

CLARA. Eagles thou doubtless see'st by flocks.

FESTUS. Not so.

Nay, crown thyself ; it will suit thee better, love.
 Place wreaths of everlasting flowers on tombs,
 And deck with fading beauties forms that fade.
 Put it away, I will no crown save this ;
 And could the line of dust which here I trace
 Upon my brow, but warrant dust beneath,
 Nor more, for aye ; or could this bubble frame
 Informed with soul, lashed from the stream of life
 By its own impetus, but burst at once
 And vanish, part on high and part below,
 I would be happy, nor would envy death :
 Could I, like heaven's bolt, earthing, quench myself,
 This moment would I burn me out a grave.

CLARA. What canst thou mean ?

FESTUS. Mean, is there not a future ?

Passed, present, coming, be accursed, each ?

CLARA. Oh say not so. The future sure is filled
 With promises. Are not even promises sweet
 From one we love and trust, of bliss ? And we,
 Shall we not ever live and love, as now ?

FESTUS. For love, I know not : live, I fear we must.

CLARA. And love, because we then are happiest, love ;
 We shall lack nothing having love ; and we,
 We must be happy everywhere, we twain.
 Life spiritual changeless even as is the sea

In essence, though of variablest aspect,
 Rolling the same through all earth's ages, now
 O'er mountain tops where only snow abides,
 And the sunbeam hurries coldly by, or o'er
 The vales, ship guesting now, of some old world,
 Older than ancient man's,—is ever great,
 Clear, self-continuative, reflecting heaven :
 So then with us. Our natures raised, refined
 From these poor forms, our days shall pass in peace,
 And love ; no thought of human littleness
 Shall cross our high calm souls, shining and pure
 As the gold gates of heaven. Like some deep lake,
 Upon a mountain summit, they shall rest,
 High above cloud and storm of life like this ;
 All peace and power and passionless purity.
 Or, if a thought of other troublous times
 Life ruffle for a moment, it shall pass
 Like a chance raindrop on its heavenward face,
 Regardless, recordless.

FESTUS. Oh ! who so wise
 As thou in things incredible, things unknown ?

CLARA. I love to meditate upon bliss to come.
 Not that I am unhappy here, but given
 To hope more perfect bliss may rectify
 The lowlier feeling we enjoy now. Earth,
 This world, this life is not enough for us ;
 They are nothing to the measure of our mind ;
 For place we must have space, for time must have
 Eternity, and for a spirit godhood.

FESTUS. Mind means not happiness ; power not good.

CLARA. True bliss
 Seek thou in holy life ; in charity ;
 Not the mere passive charity which gives,
 When asked for, coin ; but, active towards mankind,
 Embraces every good ; in love to God.
 Why should such duties cease, such powers decay ?
 Being of nature spiritual, boundless scope,
 And worthy of high uplifted life for ever ?
 Man, like the airborne eagle who remains
 On earth only to feed and sleep and die ;
 But whose delight is on his lonely wing,
 Wide-sweeping as a mind, to force the skies
 High as the light-fall, ere, begirt with clouds
 It dash this nether world, immortal man,
 If measuring not with equal mind the All,
 His aspirations yet by nought below
 Divinity coped, up rushes, aye, towards heaven,
 As his essential home. O faith ! most pure
 Of things ; the world's sole honour !

FESTUS. Come, what's faith ?
 Let us make believe like children ; faith ? A tower
 Reared of round boulders on fear's quakeful bog ;

A belfry built of dominoes on the palm
 A pulse's throb o'erthrows ;—that's my faith. Thine?
 Proceed ; past doubt thy faith works miracles.
 Work one in me now. Granted I have sinned,
 Sin would I not for ever. I repent.
 I would again be blameless. Hear, Lord. Speak
 To me thy child in thine invisible likeness,
 The wind, as once of yore. Let me be pure ;
 Let me be once more as an innocent child !
 As ere the clear could trouble me ; when life
 Was sweet and calm as is a sister's kiss ;
 And not the wild and whirlwind touch of passion
 Which though it scarcely 'light upon the lips,
 With breathless swiftness sucks the soul out of sight,
 So that we lose all thought of it. Speaks he? No !
 Though meanest of all possible miracles,
 The vast inviolate silence answers, No.

CLARA. Dost thou dictate to God?

FESTUS.

Now God forbid ;

But faith and all its promises and forms,
 And, save religion's forms what know men, show
 On heaven's part, most divine indifference.

CLARA. True faith nor biddeth nor abideth form.

Knee bended, eye uplift, with heart prostrate ;
 Is all man need to render, all God asks.
 What to the faith are forms? A passing speck,
 A crow upon the sky. God's worship is
 That only he inspires ! and his bright words
 Writ in the red-leaved volume of the heart,
 Return to him in prayer, as dew to heaven.
 We quit the right way wantonly, and life
 Call error : truth we shun, court soulless wit ;
 And say it is ignorance to adore. Our peace,
 Our proper good we rarely seek or make,
 Mindless of soul's beneficent powers and end
 Immortal, as the pearl is of its worth,
 The rose its scent, the wave its purity.

FESTUS. My soul is like to die of unproved ends.

Quit we these saddening themes. My mind too long
 Hath been begloomed by them. Sing then ; for I love
 Thy singing, sacred as the sound of hymns,
 On some bright sabbath morning, 'mid the moor,
 Where all is still save praise, of rustic saints
 Gathered beneath some wide-branched oak ; high heaven
 Sheds on the spirit its kindred calm ; hard by,
 The ripening grain its bright beard shakes i' the sun ;
 The wild bee hums more solemnly ; the deep sky,
 The fresh green grass, the sunny brook, the sun,
 All look as if they knew the day, the hour,
 And felt with man the need and joy of thanks.

CLARA. I cannot sing love's lightsome lays ; thou knowst
 Who can ; but none who love as I ; for I

Thy soul love, and would save it, Festus. Listen :

Is heaven a place where pearly streams
Glide over silver sand?
Like childhood's rosy dazzling dreams
Of some far faëry land?
Is heaven a clime where diamond dew
Glitter on fadeless flowers?
And mirth and music ring aloud
From amaranthine bowers?

Ah no; not such, not such is heaven!
Surpassing far all these;
Such cannot be the guerdon given
Man's wearied soul to please.
For saint and sinner here below
Such vain to be have proved:
And the pure spirit will despise
Whate'er the sense hath loved.

There we shall dwell with Sire and Son
And with the mother-maid,
And with the Holy Spirit, one!
In glory like arrayed:
And not to one created thing
Shall our embrace be given;
But all our joy shall be in God:
For only God is heaven.

FESTUS. Albeit God only, and our soul, the soul
Can save, I know thou lov'st me. I, in vain
Strive to love aught of earth or heaven but thee,
My first, last, only love: nor shall another
Tempt even my steadfast heart. Like far-off stars,
A thousand, sweet and bright and wondrous fair,
A thousand deathless miracles of beauty,
They shall e'er pass at all but eyeless distance,
And never mix with thy love, but be lost,
All meanly in its moonlight lustrousness.

CLARA. How still the air: the tree-tops stir no leaf
But stand and peer on heaven's bright face as though
It slept, and they were loving it: they would not
Have the skies see them move, for summers, would they?
See that sweet cloud. It is watching us I am certain.
What have we here to make thee stay one second?
Away! thy sisters wait thee in the west,
The blushing bridesmaids of the sun and sea.
Would I were like thee, little cloud, to live
Ever in heaven; or, seeking earth, let fall
My spirit down only in droplets bright of love;
Sleep on night's dewy lap; and the next dawn,
Back with the sun to heaven; and so for aye,
Sweet cloudlet! Senseless seeming things there are,
One must, almost, count happy. Oft have I watched
A gossamer line sighing itself along
The air, as it seemed, and so thin, thin and bright,
Like a stray threadlet woven in light's gay loom,

I have envied it, a moment, followed : oft
 Eye-tracked the sea-bird's down, blown o'er the wave,
 Now touching it, spirited again, aloft,
 Now out of sight, now nigh, till in some bright fringe
 Of streamy foam, as in a cage, at last,
 A playful death it dies;—and mourned its death.

FESTUS. Surely thou camest straightwise from the stars,
 And instantly from heaven : thy calm bright thought,
 Pure as the roseate snow on polar plains,
 In starlike flakelets falling, stamped with proof
 Of its high geniture, suits and soothes my mind.
 O well thou deemest of celestial things,
 And high-born duties dedicate to earth.
 To dignify the day with deeds of good,
 And eve constellate with all holy thoughts,
 This is to live, and let our lives narrate,
 In a new version, solemn and sublime,
 The grand old legend of humanity.
 But think'st thou now the future is a state
 Like positive with this, or e'er can be aught
 Than another present, toilsome, full of cares,
 Duties, perhaps ; that soul will e'er be nigher
 To God than now, save as may seem by mind's
 Debility, as from weakness of the eye,
 And the illusions matter forms, yon sun
 Shows, hot and wearied, resting upon the hill?
 It would be well I think to live as though
 Nought more were to be looked for ; to be good
 Because it is best here ; and leave hope and fear
 For lives below ourselves. If earth persuades not
 That I owe prayer and praise and love to God
 While all I have he gives, will heaven ? will hell ?
 No, neither, never.

CLARA. I think not all with thee.

FESTUS. And how, unless worst ills revive, how live ?
 Shall all defects of mind and fallacies
 Of feeling be immortalised ? All needs,
 All joys, all sorrows, be again gone through ?
 Shall heaven but be old earth created new ?
 Or earth, tree-like, transplanted into heaven,
 To flourish by the waters of life ; we, still,
 Within its shade cropping the fruit life-cored ?

CLARA. Not so ! Man's nature bodily, soul-wise, both,
 Shall be changed throughout, exalted, glorified ;
 And all shall be alike, like God ; and all
 Unlike each other, and themselves. The earth
 Shall vanish from the thoughts of those she bore,
 As have the idols of the olden time
 From men's hearts of the present. All delight
 And all desire shall be with heavenly things,
 And the new nature God bestowed on man.

FESTUS. Then man shall be no more man ; but an angel.

CLARA. Have I not heard thee hint of spirit friends,
Other than him thou spakest of now?

FESTUS.

Thou hast heard.

CLARA. Where are they now?

FESTUS. Ah close, mayhap, at hand.

And since now other miracles lack, observe !
I have a might immortal, and can ken
With angels. Neither sky, nor night, nor earth,
Hinders me. Through the forms of things I see
Their essences ; and thus, even now, behold,
But where I cannot show to thee, far round,
Nature herself, the whole effect of God.
Mind, matter, motion, heat, time, love, and life,
And death, and immortality, those chief
And first-born giants all are there, all parts,
All limbs of her their mother ; she is all.

CLARA. And what does she ?

FESTUS.

Produce ; it is her life.

The three I named last, life, death, deathlessness,
Glide in elliptic path round all things made ;
For none save God can fill the perfect whole ;
And are but to eternity as is
The horizon to the world. At certain points
Each seems the other ; now the three are one ;
Now, all invisible ; and now, as first,
Moving in measured round. To me there seems
A mocking, flickering likeness in their mien,
To some I know. Not seldom all I see,
Or mix with, seems a fleeting masque prepared
By some obsequious tyrant, bent on fraud ;
Some despot servile to necessity ; who,
For his own ends, plants before our inward eyes,
The eternal phantom of the universe,
And bids us call it real.

CLARA. How look these beings ?

FESTUS. Ah ! Life looks gaily and gloomily in turns ;
With a brow chequered like the sward, by leaves,
Between which the light glints ; and she, careless wears
A wreath of flowers ; part faded and part fresh.
And death is beautiful ; and sad ; and still.
She seems too happy ; happier far than life,
In but one feeling, apathy ; and on
Her chill white brow frosts bright a braid of snow.

CLARA. And immortality ?

FESTUS.

She looks alone ;

As though she would not know her sisterhood.
And on her brow a diadem of fire,
Matched by the conflagration of her eye,
Outflaming even that eye which in my sleep
Beams close upon me till it bursts from sheer
O'erstrainedness of sight, burns.

CLARA.

What do they ?

FESTUS. Each strives to win me to herself.

CLARA.

How?

FESTUS.

Death

Opens her sweet white arms and whispers, peace !
Come say thy sorrows in this bosom ! This
Will never close against thee ; and my heart,
Though cold, cannot be colder much than man's.
Come ! All this soon must end ; and soon the world
Shall perish leaf by leaf, and land by land ;
Flower by flower ; flood by flood ; and hill
By hill away. Oh ! come, come ! Let us die.

CLARA. Say that thou wilt not die !

FESTUS. Nay, I love death.

But Immortality, with finger spired,
Points to a distant, giant world, and says
There, there is my home. Live along with me !

CLARA. Canst see that world ?

FESTUS. Just ; a huge shadowy shape .

It looks a disembodied orb ; the ghost
Of some great sphere which God hath stricken dead.
Or like a world which God hath thought—not made.

CLARA. Follow her, Festus ! Does she speak again ?

FESTUS. She never speaks but once : and now, in scorn,
Points to this dim, dwarfed, misbegotten sphere.

CLARA. Why let her pass ?

FESTUS. That is the great world-question.

Life would not part with me ; and from her brow
Tearing her wreath of passion flowers, she flung it
Around my neck, and dared me struggle then.
I never could destroy a flower ; and none
But fairest hands like thine grace even with me
The culling of a rose. And Life, sweet Life,
Vowed she would crop the world for me, and lay it
Herself before my feet even as a flower.
And when I felt that flower contained thyself,
One drop within its nectary kept for me,
I lost all count of those strange sisters three ;
And where they be, I know not. But I see
One who is more to me.

CLARA.

I know not how

Thou hast this power and knowledge ; I but hope
It comes from good hands, be it not thine own
Force, simply of mind.

FESTUS.

Consider man's employ

So many years, and his few minutes' thought
On heaven, and own 'tis less even, what we do,
Than what we think, that fits us for the future.

CLARA. I would we had a little world to ourselves
With none but we two on it.

FESTUS.

And if God

Gave us a star, what could we do with it
But what we can, without it ? Wish it not.

CLARA. I'll not wish then for stars ; but I could love
 Some peaceful spot where we might dwell unknown ;
 Where home-born joys might nestle round our hearts,
 As swallows 'neath our roofs ; and rustic peace,
 With blessings of the lowly, innocent aims,
 And kindest neighbour charities, blend their sweets,
 As dewy tangled flowerets midst one bed,
 In pure and unimpassioned life.

FESTUS.

A cot

I know, rose-roofed, by myrtle masked, with porch
 'Twixt vine and honeysuckle embowered ; near by,
 A rill, heath-braided, crowned with flowering fern,
 Repeats the silvery tattle of the hills
 To rocks, less garrulous, maybe ; pleasance, grove,
 Silent, while song-birds sleep, with pensive gloom,
 With florid gaiety, each in turn lure. There,
 Summer's wild roselet scents the unthoughtful step
 That stills its pleading fragrance ; see, the head
 Pardoning, peeps up, unharmed. The comforting hum
 Of bees is always audible ; allwhere seen
 Fruit sweetly egering, that not cloy. There, backed
 By every sunset, ocean, in his heart,
 Changeful, but charming aye, heaven's glories now
 Liberally redoubles ; now conceals in's breast,
 Rivallous and agitated. There, friendliest morn
 Wakes you through latticed jasmin ; eve, retiring,
 Breathes of dew-beaded eglantine ; and night
 Her luminous forces, starwise, oft deploys,
 To unveil, for sage, so much as sage to unveil
 May list, the fates premonitory of men.

CLARA. That spot thou knowest ?

FESTUS.

Oh, yes, my feet could find it,

Eyes had I none. Sometime, when leisure calls,
 In virtue's vacancies, we will search it out.

CLARA. Sometime may never come. But know, friend, this !
 Virtue hath never vacancies. Her hours

Have far too solid use to need such strength
 As any gaps can give. But look ! Day dies
 Surely, of too much beauty, which becomes
 In its intensity holy ; and we fear.
 See how yon cloudlet climbs the welkin, lone,
 Like lambling strayed from some gold-fleeced flock
 Low folded by the sun ; now, dimmer grown
 Upon the æry mountain's side, and now,
 High in the infinite heavens, it disappears,
 Saintlike, updrawn to God's invisible breast,
 Wherein is rest for all things : thunder, there,
 Nor the blue flashing levin, dread seraphim
 And cherubim of storms, complain no more ;
 But hushed to silence, and their eyes tearblind,
 Crushed to his fatherly bosom, who now bids forth
 The elements, now recalls them, sleep in peace ;

Peace, how divine ; peace love I more than love.

FESTUS. The sweetest joy, the wildest woe is love,
Earth's taints, the odours of the skies are in it.
Would man were aught but that he seems, the mean
Of all extremes. Brute's death, the deathlessness
Of fiend or angel better shows than all
The doubtful prospects of our painted dust.
And all morality can teach is, bear ;
And all religion can inspire is, hope.

CLARA. It is enough. Fruition of the fruit
Of the great tree of life, is not for earth.
Stars are its fruit ; its lightest leaf is life.
The heart hath many a sorrow beside love ;
Yea, many as are the veins which visit it.
The love of aught on earth is not its chief ;
Nor should be.

FESTUS. True : inclusive of them all
There is the one main sorrow, life ; for what
Can spirit, dissevered from the great one, God,
Feel but a grievous longing to rejoin
Its infinite, its author, and its end ?

CLARA. And yet is life a thing to be beloved,
And honoured holily, and bravely borne.
A man's life may be all ease, and his death,
By some dark chance, unthought of agony ;
Or, life may be all suffering, and decease
A flowerlike sleep ; or, both be full of woe ;
Or painless each. Kind as inscrutable, Heaven
Blame not for inequalities like these ;
They may be justified ; how canst thou know ?
They may be only seeming ; canst thou judge ?
They may be done away with utterly
By loving, knowing, fearing God the truth.
Nor should love's self be grievous ; but though blent
With the world's dues, life's future, nature's claims,
And though all woes their dolorous kinship prove
With it, deem not aught ill, remediless.
In all distress of spirit, grief of heart,
In bodily agony or in mental woe,
Think thou on God, how patiently, how long,
Rebuffs and vain assumptions of the world,
He bears with disobedience of his law,
Or the poor spite of weak and wicked souls,
With men's contempt, their thanklessness, their hate ;
Joy even in thine own anguish, suffering
Assimilates thee to Him, not less than good,
Think upon what thou shalt be. Think on God.
Then ask thyself what is the world ? What time ?
And all their mountainous inequalities, what ?
Are not all equal as dust atomies strown
On heaven's bright concave ?

FESTUS.

What is, thou canst not

Persuade me of, to my much betterment?
 As ocean languishing 'neath half-lifed tides,
 Aroused at length by kindly urgent gales,
 His clay clogged deep, root upward, eyes distraught;
 Let now some snow-wind, bound to thaw his wing
 Frost feathered, mid more genial climes, but skim
 The fractious waves; these, (like to seething glass
 Glittering, planed down 'neath artist hand) by touch
 Perfective smoothed, roll lucid; so my mind,
 By doubts and passions to its depths perturbed,
 Thy luminous thought pure, piercing as the breeze
 From polar stars breathed, calms and clarifies.

CLARA. Farewell; night darkens fast; and dewfall chills.
 Remember what thou saidst about the stars.

FESTUS. Oh, yes; I oftentimes think of them and thee,
 Together.

CLARA. True?

FESTUS. Star art not of my life?

CLARA. Another night, and thou wilt tell me more
 Of wonders thou canst see?

FESTUS. Ay, thou shalt view
 Fearless, celestial marvels.

CLARA. Nay, I dread.
 But hap me weal or woe, I am thine.

FESTUS. Farewell!

CLARA. But helps not now in all those sad extremes
 Of thought thou feel'st the stranger friend I once
 One day of grievous memory, met; expert
 Of spirit, thou say'st, and other spheres, to arm
 Thy soul with faultless proofs of God's good rule,
 Life deathless? Conquered ill?

FESTUS. With proof of nothing.
 He hath a dispensation, but of doubt;
 Which umbers all my days. Spheres are, he avers,
 To have fared through, but in vision, dream, concept,
 I say not whether, but where nought which is
 Shows like conditioned with our earth state; form,
 Number, nor colour, are, nor sense, nor time;
 But souls migrate in death or life, at will,
 To vaster firmaments, or orbs minute;
 Where odd from equal differs not in kind;
 Nor contraries exist; where well's not ill's
 Foe; nor wrong, right's; as suits us here to hold,
 And verity proves not proveable.

CLARA. The false one!
 Truth's one and same in Heaven and every world,
 Even as on earth; and good, ill, false and true,
 All where, as here, opposed; just and unjust.
 Earth's moral law, like great, like grave, with those
 Which sway the spheres, space circling, know imbed
 On the attributes of God, whose onemostness
 Essential hinds the unbounded, which if not

All compassable, yet plainly, by the soul
Using such reason alone as He hath given,
Inapprehensible not. Such craze as this,
Thy friend's, so contrary to reason shocks
The mind, as base and perilous.

FESTUS. Not always
He judges like irrationally.

CLARA. Some day
Thou wilt regret such teachings as confuse
Things foulest with things loveliest. Much I fear
Thou wilt have full soon to choose between him and me.

VII.

Humanity first must expiate in fit mode
Proportionate all its sins and shortcomings,
Its mark missings perverse; which, conscious of,
And self convict, the soul its prime step takes
Towards truth and goodness absolute, which but found
Free, if self-pushed, to fall; if fallen, free
To rise, in Deity, makes man's last, best joy;
Union with God, absorption meaning not;
As through death's law, in Deity, soul by soul
Like stars to the sun's bosom; till our God,
Maker and sire of all, becomes, himself,
The sum of soul and aggregate of things
Imperfect, mutually opposed, world-soiled,
By him create; but, union with his law,
And pure acceptance on God's part of man's
Service devout to good, conceived at large,
Divine love's vast intents elect to share;
And help evolve Heaven's grand and pure designs.

A Mountain Precipice, overlooking a Lake.

FESTUS and LUCIFER.

FESTUS. Dark, wretched thoughts, like ice-isles in a stream
Clashing, choke up my mind; and to none end.
In spite of all we suffer, and enjoy,
All we believe we know, and deem to have proved,
There comes this question, over and over again,
Driven into the brain as a pile is driven,
What shall become of us hereafter? What
Is't we shall do? how live? how feel? how be?
For, granting us not perfect here, nor ill
Wholly, shall soul be moveless after death?
Progressless? or, self-lured from sphere to sphere?
Or, shall 't be all one dread remembrance crushed
Into a being, unfutured save of woe?
And so conserved by burning memory, poured
In on the mind, that wrecking we would save,

That saving, we would lose ; life's pettinesses ;
 Errors, futilities, foibles, trivial cares,
 That, like the lava-floods which choked of yore
 The Cyclopæan city, brimming up
 As with torrent brass, its mighty mould, our *own*
 Annoy we perpetuate ? And shall the passed,
 Thus ruinously perfected, e'er remain ;
 Our being's grandest moiety, our soul's
 Capacities for more good and greater power
 Than life allows, unused ? Or ends death all
 With his spiteful trick ? Like snow which lies
 Down wreathed round the lips of some black pit,
 Thoughts which obscure the truth, accumulate ;
 Which solve it, in it lose themselves. There's none
 True knowledge till descent ; nor then, till after.

LUCIFER. What shall invert the world's vast order ? bring
 The future backward on the present ? make,
 To the finite, visible, truth as 'tis in God ?
 Men glimpse the light through medium dense or clear,
 As reason rarifies, and yet so distort

That through the smoky glass of sense, the sun,
 All-blessing, scarce would know himself. So with truth.

FESTUS. The truth is known through reason, not through sense.

LUCIFER. What's truth to thee ?

FESTUS. Truth's more than all things else
 Beside itself.

LUCIFER. To every separate soul
 All men agree 'tis something like diverse.

FESTUS. What differences exist are theirs who see ;
 Not his, at whom they glance. Truth's one and same.
 As the sun, viewed at sea by thousand eyes,
 The one same orb shows ; yet no twain of men
 The identic image gaze, nor the gold waved path,
 Between ; but every soul a different sight ;
 Thus, too, each heart turned Godward, shapes its *own*
 Divine ideal, and its way towards Him,
 The infinite light, to each true, but to all
 Diverse the mean betwixt ; which mean to know,
 Is truth to question and to answer ; God
 To hold commune with by ourselves, and feel
 As power and knowledge summed, united, crowned.
 For God is truth.

LUCIFER. Truth question, then, no more.

FESTUS. I will not. But the cause I love is truth's ;
 And in it I will fight till death my soul
 Seize, to embrace it in another world
 If aid it need.

LUCIFER. It may be thou shalt faint
 From weakness on thy way ; thy purpose change ;
 Or, tempting things, how grievously ! divert.

FESTUS. I boast me not. Grant even thy kind conceit.
 Still trust I so to profit by earth's act,

That, though our sphere, and we (each round himself,
 His special interests, feelings, hopes) revolve
 Daily, on our own axis ; and yet earth
 Just progress makes 'mid space ; so soul behoves,
 Through life's broad orbit, to advance in light
 Of moral, spiritual perfectness, towards God,
 Whose shadow upon Heaven's dial falls not back
 Ever ; nor slacks ; for lo ! that shadow is truth.
 Be it therefore, that I somewhat, as thou fear'st,
 Fail on my way ; yet mine intent is firm.
 Since from the chaos of false faiths my soul
 Rose, soared to light, and ordered freedom knew,
 I have a perfect passion for the truth
 As 'tis, and only is, in God ; the one,
 Sole infinite ; sole saviour, maker, judge.
 This faith I live for, for this truth, I trust
 To hail triumphant round the earth, I'd draw
 The brand of fate, which reaps, through all the orbs,
 Their final field. My sword, 'tis true, may burst,
 Right in mine hand ; my lance snap ; my brave bow
 Rend in the midst, with life-lorn shriek ; this faith
 Quit will I ne'er, though elsewhere tried, I fell
 From sphere to sphere, and, mortal sin incurred,
 Died penally through every star in heaven.

LUCIFER. Mark me, I have a theory, too. But now,
 One universal scheme of the moral world
 Suffices, at a time, perchance. Meanwhile
 Know thou, God trieth all ; he tempteth none.
 Nor acts without just motive, nor just end.

FESTUS. Be it ! I am not one who holds his life
 A conscious crime 'gainst God. The flagrant deed
 Of others, whose like sin was that of being.
 Nor hold I as a truth all gracious Heaven
 Gave its own breath to man more sure to make
 His derperdition in the end. Let life
 Of life be judge, and its many staged career,
 And state to be ; till justest mercy draw
 Towards the eternal good, the errant soul.

LUCIFER. That were to start full fair ; and now, start we !
 Life is the one great truth ; the fiction death.
 Art never satisfied ? Must thou still and aye
 Revel in bootless questings ?

FESTUS. Lo ! I speak
 To heaven, and hell makes bold to answer me.
 It is better too than silence. What if stars
 Invoking, earth now, in forbiddance stern,
 Rumbles her caverned threatenings at my feet ;
 Or midnight clouds low muttering in long lines
 Uncomprehended thunders stun mine ear ?
 Call'st thou this power ?

LUCIFER. Yon pretty little star
 Shines, methinks on a vasty falsehood. Power

Thou hast, o'er finite agencies ; but none
 I tell thee, over the infinite. Confess,
 Therefore, unjust presumption, and receive
 Obediently, meet means. What would'st thou do ?

FESTUS. I sicken of this mean and shadowy nature,
 And shallow life ?

LUCIFER. Well, is death deep enough ?

FESTUS. Life uneternal's nought. All life's in God.
 My heart's blood is in ebb. Not rarely I think
 The sameness it is, and tameness, of the times
 Prostrates my spirit. I want an upward change.
 What do they in the asteroids ? the orb
 Whose months are years of earth ? But more, I'd see
 The roots of Hanokh, earth's metropolis
 Cain built in Nodland ; see the fanes and tombs
 Of buried states ; cities of wicked gods,
 Clouded with profane incense once ; 'neath sea
 Whelmed now, washed out.

LUCIFER. Be it as thou wilt. In time
 Thou shalt know many a mystery.

FESTUS. This I know.
 I have been told, and taught, and trained, to pray.
 I pray ; and have no answer ; may, as well
 Wrestle with the wind. I feel as might a cloud,
 Which, on the golden threshold of the skies,
 Halting and faltering, glancing towards the sea,
 Fearing to rise, and fainting, men suspect
 As a spy of night ; when it had but to soar,
 And with its excellent beauty ravish earth.

LUCIFER. There's reason now and then in similes.
 Souls are like clouds born of the infinite stock
 Of ever-formless essence ; and their race
 In bounteous beauty run, or ruinous storm ;
 Objects of love and gladness, or of ill,
 And wrong and wrath, as nature predicates ;
 Which having blessed or blasted in their life,
 Die, and rejoin the universe, to rise
 Like emanant dew on earth, in future forms
 Of retributive nature ; she herself,
 All being, doing, and enduring all.

FESTUS. This life is as a question, to which comes
 No audible answer, save an echo.

LUCIFER. Hark !

FESTUS. Where thou art, all is dumb. I would repent.
 What shall be done to expiate offence ?

LUCIFER. Well ; sacrifice a butterfly to the wind.
 As soon expect thy lifeflood tide to rise
 Out of death's baseless depths, depths yet by me
 Unplumbed, as look to be wise and innocent both.
 Heart up ! If virtue loses, wisdom wins.
 And evil and good, like the light's rays traversed
 By bandlets black, or chequered chart of old

Sun dedicate, show, originally, immixed.
Oh! I have a long antiquity at my back.

FESTUS. Good to extract from evil were not hard,
Even to God's limited creatures; and to wring
Out of good, ill, we know thy proper life;
But to transmute all evil into all good,
That were the cross of science, and the crown.
Such crown I would were mine.

LUCIFER. It is not in man.
Set clouds on fire; go, sow the sea with sand;
Then reap your crop of foam, and garner it.

FESTUS. The time shall come when every evil thing
From being and remembrance both shall die,
The world one solid temple of pure good,
Up-towering, star-crowned, to the feet of God.

LUCIFER. Never, while thou art conscious of thyself.
Never, till from that shining sheaf of days
Behind him, God, the annihilator, such name
I deepliest in me consecrate, shall pluck
Earth's death-day; and his wrath burn white for aye.

FESTUS. Let all the air be lightning; earth, dissolved
Through flames æthereal, and the twice-passed gates
Of nebular pertransition, back to void,
Vanish; and yet Heaven's ends are still achieved;
God still is good; still tends o'er those he loves.

LUCIFER. Why, therefore, comes no answer to thy prayers?

FESTUS. It may be, silence is the voice of God.

LUCIFER. Assent, or dissent; whether of the twain?

VIII.

A man in love sees wonders naturally
 Ours, sole, endowed with gifts abnormal, shows
 But gradually, his powers, and other makes
 Participable of starry views and scenes,
 And intuitions spiritual, instilled,
 May be, by angel kind, of lovelier worlds
 An ominous parable told by his love, endured,
 Heart-faltering, he his constancy asserts;
 Suspectible, so affirmed; but wait the end.
 And who can thought control? the wish who shun
 One may not all avert, nor, vexed, evade,
 But like a stranger in the street, we meet,
 Nor can aside from, haunts us, that we work
 Our selfish will, and yet please God too? See
 The first leaf falls of heart's bloom. Discontent
 With nature; strong desire; implanted how?
 Springs up to know all life; the secrets learn
 Of science, and time's truths arcane; projects
 Evil would fulfil, that this forebusied, soul
 All virtue of self ascription to its lord
 Might lose. The heart, doubt-torn disposed to death,
 End, if e'er writ 'mong possible things, erased.

*Lawn and Parterre; Bridge, and Village Church in distance.
 Evening. FESTUS and CLARA.*

FESTUS. My soul's orb darkens, as a sudden star
 Which, heaven and earth of wonder emptied, wanes;
 Passes for aye; eclipsed not; self-consumed;
 All but a cloudy vapour, dimming there
 The spot in space it once illumed. To myself
 Once seemed as I a mount of light; but now,
 A pit of night. I dare no more of this.
 For like a shipwrecked stranger in a lighthouse
 I have looked down on the dark and utter side
 Of such thoughts, from the leeming room of reason,
 And beheld all beyond black, roaring madness.
 As earth through all her polar midnight feels
 The o'erbearing strain which warps her toward the sun,
 That know I, I mayn't rid me of: the sense
 Of late success disastrous to be gained
 At price of present happiness. It is done.
 Being due but to its end, makes wretched me
 Untimely while assured the world itself
 Shall reconcile to virtue ere I part
 Unsatiated of the world. Fate! ask not sole
 One sacrifice this heart faithful to me,
 Nearer which ought to be each hour; but asked
 By natural augury or mute charm, no sign
 To me the incommunicant future yields,
 More than the silvery mirror of the main
 Mist veiled, all imagery of clouds; nor more
 Though sought with prayers, foretells me Heaven through those

Lights and perfections of our nature, God
 Hath in our faculties spiritually enshrined,
 But for the day. It is by events we live.
 Anticipations fool us to the quick.
 Conjecture, oh prediction, out on ye !
 Come nearer to me, Clara, where hast been
 This long, long hour ?

CLARA. I have been but here, hard by,
 Planting these flowerets by the brook, that they,
 Not of felicitous feeling void, their own
 Or other's, beauties might reflective note
 In the swift sparkling wave : and odorous gifts
 Uncustomary, exchange.

FESTUS. Ah happy flowers !
 When shall I know such calm ? But I have vowed
 To be joyous in myself, I will be ! See,
 Here have I lain all day in this green nook,
 Shaded by larch and hornbeam, ash and yew ;
 A living well and runnel at my feet ;
 And wild flowers dancing to some delicate air ;
 An urn-topped column, and its ivy wreath,
 Skirting my sight, as thus I lie and look
 Upon the blue, unchanging, sacred skies ;
 And thou too, gentle Clara, by my side,
 With lightsome brow and beaming eye, and bright
 Long glorious locks which drop upon thy cheek,
 Like gold-hued cloudflakes on the rosy morn.
 Oh ! when the heart is full of sweets to o'erflowing,
 And ringing to the music of its love,
 Who, not an angel, nor a hypocrite,
 Could speak or think of happier states ?

CLARA. In truth
 I know not ; but a sadness that to me
 Feels mortally prophetic, charged with threats
 Of severance, coldness, fears of possible death,
 Change in the faith may be of one of us,
 And such like sad contingencies, weighs down
 At times, my heart much ; sadly more than all,
 Life's promises seem to lighten or lift.

FESTUS. Away
 With baleful thoughts ; let joyaunce be our life.
 Well art thou Clara hight, for soul more bright,
 More lovely, lives not out of Paradise.

CLARA. I have another name whose element
 Is tears, they tell me. In the coming time,
 Who knows ? it may become me more than this.

FESTUS. 'Gainst that sad augury set thou my resolve ;
 And be it fordone for ever.

CLARA. Fate will prove.
 But oh ! I dread estrangement, dread to dream ;
 Lest even dreams should wrong thee, and thou act
 As in time's great betrothals legends tell

Man brake his vows, and Nature's holy heart
So suffered, that the wound scarce yet is healed.
For I have heard how once in the head of days
Man lived with Nature as his sacred bride
In union pure and perfect. All her wealth,
Which God had dowered her with, from the rich gems
That starred her sandals, and so lit her path,
To the predominant virtues of the spheres,
And latent life of elements, she to him
For that her lord was poor though potent, gave.
He too with ampler thought and vital truths,
Strewn in divine disorder like the stars
Which to the ignorant mean nought, but to the eye
Instructed, oft configure boundless good ;
With deep conceit of mysteries, than all rocks
Fire-grained, or sea-couched, and all stories fraught
With wisdom, though in earliest fable penned,
Elder ; aught worthy knowing was soon known ;
So sanctified her spirit that she became
Like a created goddess. Her he taught
The life in life of faith ; and what on earth
Was powerfulest of things, the bended knee
Which can prevail o'er God ; and how, all years,
For one clear hour, earth hath the option now
To rest, and ruin all things, but renew
Her maiden splendour and primæval bliss ;
Or, bearing fate, like chance of equal meed,
Secure the starry skies. These mark her thread,
Amid the hush of heaven, their thronging spheres,
And her light footsteps, lauding, breathless wait
Her choice in charmed silence ; she sweeps on ;
Such holy confidence hath earth in heaven,
Her surety, that though favourite, nay elect
Herself now, all shall ultimately be blessed.
Thus intimate with time's deep things and high
They reigned like regal angels. To his kin
All powers and pleasures he promulged ; and rites
Omen and augury hallowing, rayed round shrines
Where gods might worship ; and beyond this, fed
His soul on secret wisdom, as on fasts
The spirit thriveth. These espoused, inspired
With their thus harmonized perfections, lived
Long while in bliss and honour, each content
With faith-life, mythic, vast ; all arts to them,
All science ancillary. But ah ! in fine,
And in the heel of time which treads us down,
There came a change. The wrong was surely man's ;
For nature fails not ; but how none hath shown,
Whether a too approving smile misled,
Dim her ascent but brilliant in her fall,
Some emulative handmaid ; and what first
Seemed zeal to serve grew rivalry to please ;

Or fair confederates, faultless till they fell,
 Made strength vaunt of his failure ; this we know ;
 Imperfect wearie of perfection sole.
 So he, the keystone loosed of loyalty,
 Lapsed from his liege love, warps his heart from her,
 Beauteous and bounteous as a sovereign saint ;
 And to a thousand lax and painted arts,
 Of barren glitter and unholy wiles,
 Like sultan flaunting through his gay hareem,
 Flowered with the carnal beauties of all climes,
 Vows the idolatrous homage of his lips.
 His home he left, and leaving, lost his rights
 O'er nature's secret treasures ; for in belief
 Walking no more ; nor with the miracles
 Himself of old, divine magician, wrought,
 Faith instigating, and storied in the stars,
 Earth's holy primer, versant ; he, in art's
 Sensuous conceits, or idol imagery,
 Lewd solace seeks ; or else with science, guide
 Guideless, self-nominated, through life's wide maze
 Roams with no saving clue. Keys all in vain,
 He forges ; locks he forces : nought is there.
 In vain conjures the elements ; these are born
 Of nature's household, and are sworn to her ;
 No mysteries, now, soul-thrilling, prodigies all
 Repressed or ridiculed, faith made thrall to fact,
 And life, well nigh sabbatic wholly, once,
 With scarce one hour left of a holy day.
 His tongue hath lost the simple spell of truth.
 Neither believing nor believed, he roams,
 Peaceless and powerless, round his forfeit realm,
 Free, though as outcast. Yea, till he redeem
 His troth to nature, she who was his queen,
 Ere consort, and at her immaculate feet,
 Whiter than moonlit water, shall lay down
 For aye his falsehoods, brave through penitence, rest
 Nor holy home, shall ever again be man's.

FESTUS. Neither was nature perfect, as I thought.

CLARA. Oh, is it possible thou hast never known
 How both derived their fates ? Wilt hear ?

FESTUS. Proceed.

CLARA. Yon sun, just set, all seeing, all beseen,
 Filling the sacred seven and urns of fire,
 Had, time unlimited, lived debarred of life
 Soul-hallowed ; when our God, his kind intent
 Now agefully matured, all things prepared,
 Incorporated its spirit, and for mate
 Made him the lucid moon, now rolling round
 His disk immense, at fatal distance doomed.
 O Sun, O Moon, king of the skies and queen ;
 Hero and heroine of the universe, ye ;
 Lovers divine, daughter and son of God.

How shall a feeble, humble tongue like mine
 Your fall sublime, sad but illustrious lapse,
 To mortal mind convey? Free were they both
 To roam the skies; or, if forbidden aught
 Were named in heaven's infinitude, so vast
 Their spatial liberty, no laws they knew.
 But written within the book divine of fate
 One law there was. For ages unconceived,
 They nothing knew but light unshadowed, life,
 Love, liberty, all unhaunted, undeformed
 By one divisive moment, or mere fear;
 Till, in the plains celestial wandering once,
 And heaven till then no happier orbs embraced,
 A radiant path as though by feet of gods
 Trodden, star-littered, as earth with golden seed
 Autumnal, on the gleaner's yellow road,
 They neared; and where it brightly branched in twain
 One listless moment separated.

FESTUS.

Alas!

Thenceforth one sole tradition streaks time's stream,
 From the dumb ages of the passed, to truth's
 Eternal future. Ah yes, I see the sun
 Unguarded, now betrayed, incarcerate, bound,
 Blinded, insulted, mocked, to incessant toil
 Doomed, wageless; bound; now, ready to be slain
 In bonds on heaven's high hill; yea, see him at last,
 Smote by the star-bear's wide and wintry wound,
 To yearly death, set 'neath the snake-wreathed pole,
 Hiding in Hadean tomb, his disrayed crown.
 Tales though traditionary, still hopeless not.
 For again I see him, majestic and serene,
 Though suffering from the unkindly detriment
 Which earthly nature treacherous him hath wrought.
 He quits the ærial desert; lifts his head
 Glad, like wrecked swimmer, shorewards, and salutes.
 As with a kiss of fire our hallowed earth,
 The threshold of his old abode the heavens.
 Once more in heaven, the reascendent light
 Beams from the burning cross which marks his course
 Triumphant over lessening night; once more
 The lord of nature lifts his conquering brow
 As though from death eterne.

CLARA.

These lovers twain

For a space though separated, I said, full soon
 Their spherul courses recombining, came
 To the vast portal of a luminous fane
 Guarded by living forms of shapes unknown,
 But void within. A vacant throne was all
 The dome sublime contained; upon whose steps
 A star-scaled serpent slumbered. Roused—

FESTUS.

No more!

If only as some cloud-giant hurled from heaven,

And vapouring as he falls, thy words to me
Seem threatful of time future, and my mind
Give sensible unease. Peace will lastly come,
Howe'er disseverance loving souls may grieve,
The wise well know true union is in heaven,
And there alone.

CLARA.

It may be.

FESTUS.

Types of truth,

These pressed upon creation through all spheres
Material, mental, by God's hand and seal :
Truths which time's ear for ages hears with awe
Servile, nor knows their meaning ; as earth stunned
With thunders, said, of gods ; till some sage earns
Heaven's humble secret ; and from man's freed mind
The fiery fiction fades. Think thou no more
On ill-houred apologue or of man or star.
Hear rather thou what glads me to have seen
Trance-wise, a bright miraculous mystery
Of God ; a vision worth all sequels lost
Of love estranged. The great reunion hear :
The divine marriage of the moon and sun.
The sun was flaming high in heaven ; the moon
Mighty though mild, and all the saintly stars
Beaming at once in grandeur and grave joy.
'Twas the world's All-Sire gave the bride. The Hours,
Companions of her course, forewrit on high,
And all its sevenfold Sanctities, virgin peers,
Were her immortal bridemaids ; and strewed
On her white way, by many a mansion lamped
With festive radiance, astral wreath, and robe,
Girdle, and palm-branch,—palm, sole tree that greens
Both heaven and earth, to where in dayless time,
Degreeless space, her absolute home, prepared
Nigh to the infinite, stood. Struck loud their lyres
Of light, the angels ; and to the feet of those
Divine ones bowed them, as to spirit and soul
Conjoined, of things celestial ; with acclaim
Ecstatic, far off hailing each and crying,
Welcome thou lord, thou bride of light ; all joy
In everlasting being be yours ; and all
The universal blessing, God, can give.
Choicest of all the chosen, thy love is more
To the soul delicious than, to scent, the rose,
Purer than is the lily or is the light.
Lord of the dawn, thee now the wearied world
Awaits ; earth's eyes with watching for this day
Fail. The bread's broken and the wine is poured,
And all the guests are gathered, from the bounds
Of heaven's imperial horizon, to this,
Our bright palatial centre. All things serve
The hallowing rite, which nature owns with God.
And so they became one. In golden he,

In silver car came she, down the blue skies,
 But on return they clomb the clouds in one
 And vanished in their snow. The marriage feast
 Was held, throughout the intelligible world,
 An universal holiday ; all now 'lumed
 With light than sunlight softer, than the moon's,
 Mightier and more intense ; nor since have ceased
 The great congratulations. Peace and love
 Pervade the perfect state, and all is bliss.

CLARA. True prophet mayst thou be. But list ; that sound,
 The passing-bell, the spirit should solemnise ;
 For, while on its emancipate path, the soul
 Still waves its upward wings, and we still hear
 The warning note, it is known, we well may pray.

FESTUS. But pray for whom ?

CLARA. It means not. Pray for all.

Pray for the good man's soul
 He is leaving earth for heaven,
 And it soothes us to feel that the best
 May be forgiven.

FESTUS. Pray for the sinful soul ;
 It fleeth, we know not where ;
 But wherever it be, let us hope ;
 For God is there.

CLARA. Pray for the rich man's soul ;
 Not all be unjust, nor vain ;
 The wise he consoled ; and he saved
 The poor from pain.

FESTUS. Pray for the poor man's soul ;
 The death of this life of ours
 He hath shook from his feet ; he is one
 Of the heavenly powers.
 Pray for the old man's soul ;
 He hath laboured long ; through life
 It was battle or march. He hath ceased,
 Serene, from strife.

CLARA. Pray for the infant's soul ;
 With its spirit crown unsoiled,
 He hath won, without war, a realm ;
 Gained all, nor toiled.

FESTUS. Pray for the struggling soul ;
 The mists of the straits of death
 Clear off ; in some bright star-isle
 It anchoreth.

Pray for the soul assured ;
 Though it wrought in a gloomy mine,
 Yet the gems it earned were its own,
 That soul's divine.

CLARA. Pray for the simple soul ;
 For it loved, and therein was wise ;
 Though itself knew not, but with heaven
 Confused the skies,

FESTUS. Pray for the sage's soul ;
 'Neath his welkin wide of mind
 Lay the central thought of God,
 Thought undefined.
 Pray for the souls of all
 To our God that all may be,
 With forgiveness crowned, and joy
 Eternally.

CLARA. Hush ! for the bell hath ceased ;
 And the spirit's fate is sealed ;
 To the angels known ; to man
 Best unrevealed.

FESTUS. Stay ; what wouldst say, yet ? Something, surely, sad
 Darkens thy mind's disk. Speak it.

CLARA. Nay, not sad.
 Some other time.

FESTUS. Why now, love.

CLARA. Well then thus.
 These vast unearthly powers thou hast, thou saidst
 I should myself for once partake. Let me
 Assure my own heart they be innocent.
 Refused, I judge them evil ; if harmless they,
 Thou wilt permit me share, or view, the means.
 This ask I therefore, not from vain desire
 Of prying into mysteries, nor as test
 Of words of thine ; for thee believe I truly :
 But as a proof of love and harmlessness,
 To view with these same marvelling eyes of mine,
 The sensible form of some obedient sprite,
 Or invocable angel. Wilt thou ?

FESTUS. Ay.
 Wouldst parley Luniel on her silvery seat,
 Or the star-tiared Ourania ? for the night
 Deepens in heaven ; and even now I see
 Earth's cardinal world-watchers, each prepare
 His wing to poise for paradisaal flight,
 Relieved by darker angel.

CLARA. None of these.
 Behold yon star just trembling into light.
 Hath it a tutelary spirit ?

FESTUS. Yea, every star.

CLARA. Prepare thy spell then. I would see its form ;
 And hear its voice.

FESTUS. Weird charm nor spell I use ;
 Nor incantation. My sole magic, might.
 Mine only sign, this ; this my spirit ring.
 Prayer, faith, and a pure heart can draw down heaven.
 Most surely then one star. Kneel thou with me.

Spirit of yon star, that now
 Peer'st through God's all-clothing sky,
 List, we need thee here below ;
 Leave thy mystic light on high.

By the all-compelling name,
Thought alone, but uttered never ;
Word in heaven and earth the same,
Come thou now, and come thou ever.
What seest thou ?

CLARA. I perceive a lustrous form,
Led by a loftier one, of mien serene,
The first, as timid, and to earth strange, last
Of heavenlies, seems as with a message charged
I might be fain to hear.

FESTUS. This, luminous soul,
Reflective, makes as venturing towards myself.

CLARA. Well doth each grace thy potent word. For me,
I feel a light, a voiceable power.

FESTUS. Arise !
What wilt thou oft ?

CLARA. Nought will I. Let it speak.

STAR SPIRIT. Man's vital frame of the elements is ta'en ;
And when by sacred energy of mind,
He nature's robe can thread by thread unwind,
Till death's proved nothingness, show sunwise plain
Life's allness ; heaven's true science then ye gain ;
Learn how God yearns all souls in bliss to bind ;
How, too, through heaven and angels, stars and earth,
He, All-Sire, bounteous, wise as just, through light,
Light natural and intelligible which springs
From Deity, both, eternal outflowings,
Spread through the universe of death and birth,
Sweet surety of immortal essence brings
To spirit advised of reason infinite,
And, with the powers, ends, place to it assigned,
The ultimate content of all living things.
For as even all mere existence hath due worth,
End justified by God, who caused to be ;
So, knit together by wisest amity,
Plant, planet, star, gem, life instinctive, life
Angelic ; all, man's soul, by like decree,
Teach, each through noble or virtuous quality,
The whole with order, goodness, happiness rife,
His being and progress through eternity,
Know mortal, then, that with or gem or flower,
Love's glance, or earth-lent ray of farthest star,
To such as, faith-led, seek in doubt's dark hour
Truth, holiest influences may be, yea are ;
And gracious interchange of special power.

CLARA. Star Spirit, it is so.

STAR SPIRIT. Who his soul-path knows
To the one universal Spirit, and rightly seeks
How long or sore soe'er his struggles, falls,
Relapses, shall, by penitent labour nerved,
And in spirit refreshed by heavenly counsels brought
By the angel of the day, who gives to God

His hourly record of men's deeds, at last,
Soul-perfectness enjoy ; his life's long course,
With all best purposes strengthened,—as a stream
Sea-bound, that with a thousand rills empowered
No meet recipient save the main knows ; summed
In the eternal Good.

FESTUS. So be it with all.

CLARA. Oh I have gazed on spiritual beauty, known
Till now, by none.

FESTUS. Let both rejoice in truths
We may hold, loyally, supreme. As when
Before some mighty suzerain, crowned of God,
A vassal sultan, tribute to discharge,
Or homage yield, kneels, resolutely content ;
Nations kneel with him, and in his prostrate brow,
A people of pride kiss dust ; so, I, with all
Truth-lovers, though a half-tribe scarce of man,
And dizzied yet with soul-light, Spirit, to thee.
Thy starry name ?

STAR SPIRIT. Pneumaster.

CLARA. Where dost dwell ?

STAR SPIRIT. I in my star abide, yet oft in heaven.
Not where the precreated seraphs beam,
Nor cherubim with countenance winged ; who round
Heaven circling, as with whirlwind wings of light,
A holy and living throne for the Spirit, form,
All-hallowing ; but where sainted souls attain,
Heroical ; chanting now, God's mercy thrice
Victorious o'er all worlds sin-treasoned, sworn
To evil and vanity ; who the mysteries now
Of wisdom hymn, the holy inspiring light
Which Deity sows in nature and in stars,
Sows, reaps, and in men's souls replants, blessed heirs
Of either world, above beloved, below
Accepted ; now, with guardian spirits of spheres,
Angelical and elect, mixed, I, too, serve ;
All orders of each other inpenetrant, now ;
For, by the fall of Lucifer, pride's no more,
If e'er in heaven ; in heaven, as now on earth,
Humility, highest of all virtues, known.
I thus at thy behest, immortal, come
To obey a mortal's will, thine own, whose sleep
The angels guard, with dreams bestarred, of heaven ;
Dreams that oft check, with suspensory charm,
The wing of wandering heavenly ; dreams I ask
To inspire, then, on mine own bright ray return.

CLARA. Holy and lovely sprite, be thou with God.

STAR SPIRIT. Cherished of heaven, earth's choicest souls, farewell !

CLARA. Farewell, too, thou.

LUNIEL. From yon high astral arch
Gliding, and wide white halo, I and this
Bright virtue, holy guardian of an orb,

But lately parented of skies and spheres
 Me visiting, heard the call ; and prompt to instil
 In this thy loved one's heart the hallowing truth
 That life's best charm is brave content with life,
 Continuously progressive, see us here
 Such aim, such life be hers, not spare of grief ;
 Thou man hast mightier ends to attain and serve.
 But scarce yet ripe for converse with spheres
 Not always to be deemed as distant. Know,
 Means amplest by God's will around thee placed ;
 Mine own, in time first, haste the hour to attend
 Thee thither, and the searchful soul to assist
 By voluntary commission of divine
 Helps, to conceive the plan of God's great whole ;
 The reason of its existence ; all its aids
 Immediate, goodwards tending, and the spread
 Of sequent joy substantial through all worlds.

CLARA. Gone, gone that star-pure spirit.

FESTUS. And, following thou,
 Sweet compeer of such astral guests. May night,
 Earth's healing shadow, from her sphere-bright form
 Unfolded virtuously, thy soul release
 From all ill, all defect ; that so through dreams
 Thou mayst in spiritual Edens taste the joys
 Anticipative, thou hopest, and feel the sense
 Of heavenly patterned powers, whereof day owns
 But a mean, blenched, copy. Go ; I do commend thee
 To all good angels, maiden ; and if so much
 I love thee, yet I dare not as I would.
 For all the heart most longs for, most deserves,
 Passes the soonest and most utterly.
 The moral of the world's great fable, life.
 All we enjoy seems given but to deceive,
 Or, may be, undecieve us ; and when done
 The sum and proved, why work it over again ?
 They are gone, the heavenly and the earthly. I,
 As a lone column, cold in sunshine, stand
 Projecting darkness only,—around me cast
 Soul-saddening shadows. What indeed is life,
 This life-world, Lord, wherein thou hast founded me
 But a bright wheel which burns itself away,
 Benighting even night with its grim limbs,
 When it hath done, and fainted into darkness ?
 For say, we are promised life immortal, how
 Even then shall we exist ? Hath soul a soul
 Grosser without and spiritual fine within ?
 Are grades in deathlessness, and bounds which mark
 From existence essence, as in our bodily frame
 Flesh seems but fiction, for it flies away ;
 While this the gaunt and ghastly thing we bear
 In us, and hate and fear to look upon,
 Is truth, in death's dark likeness limned. No more ?

IX.

To choose we are forced, but what to choose is ours,
 How providently, how happily time will prove.
 Comes on a quarrel stormy and stern, if brief,
 'Tween the two foe friends, this, demanding what
 Cannot be ; who immunity shall secure
 'Gainst self-sought evil ? that, safe grants withholding
 And easily made ; their taunts recriminative
 Resultless proven ; as when some summer eve
 Two emulous youths from strict scholastic toil
 Set free by holy night, looser of bonds,
 Rush bounding to the main slumbering hard by,
 With latent light inly aflame, and quick
 Implunged, rise gameful, glittering like star-gods
 Lean arrogant on the lightning wave ; launch each
 'Gainst other, liquid meteors thunderless,
 The foam handsmote in showerlets archwise falls
 Flashing, about them ; neither gains ; so part
 Our disputants ; one, separative, and one
 Adherent more to pact implied, the attack
 On faith contrives through sadd'st inconstancy.

Heath and Sands by the Sea.

FESTUS ; and afterwards LUCIFER.

FESTUS. Love's heart is right, how prescient of all truth
 To come, it needs ; nor long my choice o'erdue,
 'Tween angel incomplete and finished fiend.
 Say, I have chosen, and freely. What results ?
 I am no mightier master than erewhile ;
 Nor favoured more of Heaven, so lavish long
 Of most oracular promises. I pray ;
 Pray, only, to be made child-pure.

LUCIFER.

Child-pure !

A simple enough request !

FESTUS.

And lo ! as far

As infinite silence makes, I learn but this ;
 God hath refused me. Wilt thou do it for me ?
 Or shall I end with both ? Remake myself ?

LUCIFER. Remake ! Do, if thou canst and wilt. But know
 It is the one thing I cannot do for thee.
 Am I not open with thee ? Why choose that ?

FESTUS. Because I will it. Thou art bound to obey.

LUCIFER. The world bears marks of mine obedience.

Well, 'tis a judgment doubtless. Heaven is just.
 And justly asking faith of all that all
 Even ill, served ultimately His own wise ends ;
 He all disposing, I rebel : and now,
 In my turn asking nothing but belief
 Unflinching, in oneself, say ; I foresee

Thou wilt bring to an end the whole, ere well begun.

FESTUS. My heart, like an insurgent king no more
 Brooks the accustomed tribute.

LUCIFER.

Well, I waive it.

FESTUS. Off ! I am torn to pieces. Let me try,
And gather up myself into a man,
As once I was. I cannot live, and live
In endless doubt. The day hath lost its charm,
The night its holy beauty, when from heart,
Even if not whole with God, faith fled, hope fails
In warrantable prediction, or conceit
Of better things.

LUCIFER. Oh, if thou lov'st a creed,
Be pessimist, nihilist, an' thou wilt. There are
Who deify the Devil in their own hearts,
In dreams of everlasting nothingness.

FESTUS. Be what I may, I have done with thee. Dost hear ?

LUCIFER. Thou canst not mean this ?

FESTUS. Once for all, I do.

LUCIFER. It is men who are deceivers, not the devil.
The first and worst of all frauds is to cheat
Oneself. All sin is easy after that.

FESTUS. I feel that we must part ; part now or never.
And I had rather of the two 'twere now.

LUCIFER. This is my last walk through my favourite world,
And I had hoped, with thee to have enjoyed it.
For thee I quitted hell ; for thee my soul
Shrivelled and warped into a man ; for thee
Shed I my shining wings ; for thee, this mask
Of flesh put on, and seeming shape like thine ;
This moveless mockery of mere motion, brooked ;
And now, by my woe I swear, that were I now,
For thy false heart to give my spirit spring,
I would scatter soul and body both to hell,
And let one burn the other.

FESTUS. If thou darest
Lift but the finger of a thought of ill
Against me, and—thou durst not ; mark, we part.

LUCIFER. Well, as thou wilt. Remember soon thy heart
Will shed its pleasures, as thine eye its tears ;
And both leave loathsome furrows.

FESTUS. Thinkest thou
I will have no pleasures without thee, vain fiend,
Who marrest all thou makest, and even more ?

LUCIFER. Thou canst not, save indeed some poor trite thing
Called moderation, every one can have.
And modesty, heaven knows, is suffering.

FESTUS. Now will I prove thee liar, for that word ;
And that the very vastest out of hell.
With perfect condemnation I abjure
My soul ; my nature doth abhor itself
For giving thee one moment's right to touch me.
Hence, let me pass. I have a soul to spare.

LUCIFER. A hundred, I. He is gone ; though but for a time,
He braves me, he ! even as, on cave-rent coast,

Hard driven by hurricane blast, the mounting tide
 Like a white wild beast, chased, flashes into its den,
 The assault turns ; heads the attack ; the slackening wave
 O'ertakes, and raging, quells for a moment ; soon
 The flood, inveterate victor, rising swift
 With grave equality, smoothens all ; cave, crag,
 Torrent ; who knows strife was, or where ? Meanwhile,
 I have him yet ; for he is mine to tempt.
 Beside the greed of power, and rage to know
 All knowable, there's much magic in life's waste
 On abstruse studies that can benefit none ;
 Ignoring wilfully, so, men's proper end
 Of mutual good. Of such I know, and may,
 Him stimulating with somewhat of all lures,
 Perchance, in time, take due avail. It may be,
 Gold ; gold hath the hue of hell-flames ; but for him
 I will lay some brilliant and delicious lure
 Shall be worth perdition to a seraph. Only,
 Consider beauty's argument, how it tells ;
 Her eye's close reasoning glance ; delicious proof,
 Her fingers clasp ; her lip's soft summing up ;
 The delicate peroration of her sigh ;
 Scarce audible ; visible rather ; oh, I know ;
 Passion, thou exquisite spirit, now's thy turn.
 And if he love not now, while woman is
 All bosom to the young, when shall he love ?
 Who ever paused on passion's fiery wheel ?
 Or trembling by the side of her he loved,
 Whose lightest touch brings rapture, e'er stopped short
 His eloquent speech, to reckon up his pulse ?
 The car comes ; and they lie and let it come,
 Triumphant. See, it crushes, kills. What then ?
 It holds their god, their idol ; so they die ;
 Doubtless, of joy. And he, he looks not one
 Enough shall fool : but sick of skill in foils
 He flings away, risks ne'er aught less than life.
 Nay, let him look on aught which casts the shadow
 Of a royal pleasure, and methinks he'd dare
 Embrace a bride of fire. Such love is. Arms !
 To arms ; so, beauty they be thine. For love
 Like nature, is war ; sweet, sensible war. And now,
 Pleasure, shall any part thee from my use ?
 Let wring God's lightnings from the grasp of God,
 But who his tactics blabs ? Or I an end
 More summary might forefix. One beauty may
 Be played against other ; and faith, once uncaged,
 Whistles with oh ! such sweetness, from the bough.
 Most men glide quietly and deeply down.
 Some, and 'tis passion plunges fiercest men
 Into mine arms, as find they will who will
 Seek hell's abysses like to cataracts !
 And he shall sometime, seek it how he may.

But it matters not ; hell burns before them all.
 It is by hell-light which through their life's thick fog
 Glares red and round ; which gone, would leave to grope
 In utter dark these heirs of heaven, they shine
 To each other ; and their chiefest deeds achieve.
 The thought revives one. I felt chilled ; but now,
 Oh for a fan ! all Ophir for a fan.

X.

Meanwhile, as nought
 Had passed, we see them presently, meet. Who knows
 How 'tis we reconcile ourselves to evil ?
 But in this bird's-eye view of earth, and track
 Of dust stirred through all nations, note we whilst
 His friend malevolent triumphs by control
 Of superficial miracles, compassing
 With him, as day and night, together, earth,
 Man, shown all forms and fanes of faith as vain
 Alike, in God's esteem, knows, in truth's light
 Her total season, sunlight, blossoming here,
 Here ripening, God his secret will, well-pleased,
 Sees gradually mature ; domes old or new
 Misdedicate, or mean, with his presence filled,
 To himself, the all-shrined One reserves ; until,
 In all earth's living tabernacles, each land
 Him worship, God, the untempled, whom all creeds
 Concelebrate.

Earth's Surface—An Hour's Ride.

LUCIFER and FESTUS.

LUCIFER. Wilt ride ?

FESTUS.

I'll have an hour's ride.

LUCIFER. Be mine the steeds ; be me the guide.

I something know of almost every land,

Their features, products, legends. Understand

My lot has been to know men's sagest teachers ;

Their prophets, patriots ; and, go to !—their preachers.

Apart from any prejudice, let me add,

They are, most of them, indifferently bad.

FESTUS. Quick ! I'll not question what you say.

LUCIFER. It's odd I never make a call

But it's—Long looked for, after all !

FESTUS. Come, call your hacks.

LUCIFER.

Oh, they'll not stay.

It may not be with me as some ;

What I invoke is pretty safe to come.

Come hither, come hither, my brave black steed ;

And thou too, his fellow, hither with speed ;

Though not so fleet as the steeds of death,

Your feet are as sure ; ye have longer breath ;

Ye have drawn the world without wind or bait,
Six thousand years, and it waxeth late ;
So take me this once, and again to my home ;
And rest ye, and feast ye.

FESTUS. They come, they come.
Tossing their manes like
Pitchy or snowy surge ; and lashing
Their tails into a tempest ; their eyes flashing
Like shooting thunderbolts.

LUCIFER. So ! know your masters, colts.
Choose.

FESTUS. The white one.

LUCIFER. Be it so,
Mourning suits me best, we know.
Up and away.

FESTUS. Hurrah ! hurrah !
The noblest pace the world e'er saw.
I swear by heaven, we'll beat the sun,
In the longest heat that ever was run,
If we keep it up, as we've begun.

LUCIFER. I told thee my steeds were a gallant pair.

FESTUS. And they were not thine, they might be divi e.

LUCIFER. Thine is named Ruin, and Darkness mine.

FESTUS. Like all of thy deeds, now, that's unfair.

LUCIFER. A civiller and gentler beast
Than thine, thou hast never crossed, at least.
Now, look around.

FESTUS. Why, this is France !
Nature is here like a living romance.
Look at its vines, and streams, and skies ;
Its glancing feet, and dancing eyes.

LUCIFER. Well worth no doubt a second glance.
But now, one glimpse with me, from Alp to main !
See its wide glebe, with rooted seas of grain
Billowing ; its cities bowered mid fruit-groves, here,
Such as by Adour, or Dordogne, a life
Flowerful all years enjoy ; there, heights cave crowned
Where lordly savage, long ere time could count
How many his fingers, or his horn-book knew,
Warful 'gainst the elements, pampered babe and mate,
On the pink silvered pith of fawnling's limbs,
And marrow of all he slew ; and there, his life's
Last chase achieved, to the end superb, his neck
With rough red amber gorgeous, greatly died.

FESTUS. Now, Europe's head, all others scorning ;
Model of states, now ; then, their warning ;
Strangest of nations, light yet strong,
Fierce of heart, and blithe of tongue,
Prone to change, so fond of blood,
She wounds herself to quaff her own,
Shows, aye, a brave, bright, lovely land ;
And well deserving every good .

Which others wish themselves alone ;
 Could she but herself command.

LUCIFER. On, on, no more delay
 Or we'll not ride round the world, all day.

FESTUS. Good horse get off the ground.

LUCIFER. Sit firm ; and if our coursers please
 We'll take at once the Pyrenees.
 'Twas bravely leapt.

FESTUS. Ay, this is Spain ;
 Europe's last land 'twill e'er remain.
 Last in the progress of the earth
 To moral light, and liberty ;
 In all things last, to prove how bigotry
 Can waste all wealth, and banish worth.
 Studded with many a gloomy shrine
 What is't men worship here, I pray ?

LUCIFER. This fane, once Moslem, Christian now,
 Refuses obstinately to say.

FESTUS. But mean not men to one, the same, divine,
 However rites may vary, e'er to bow ?

LUCIFER. Away, nor loiter now for pictured art,
 Or natural scene by miracle consecrate
 Or patriot war, mock chivalry or true ;

FESTUS. Not where the rivulets flow of life, and death,
 Nor Tayo's wave gold-footed ? Not even to spy
 The Iberian vault, where, sire of swords, Tubal
 Abode, first ; great Alcides, after, famed
 For magic, marvels necromantic, wealth
 Untold, unhallowed ?

LUCIFER. Not an instant. Come !
 Turn thy steed, and slacken rein ;
 Quick, we must be back again ;
 O'er the vale hid in the mountain ;
 O'er the merry forest fountain ;
 Ruin and Darkness, we must fly
 O'er crag and rift, swift, swift, swift
 As the glance of an eye.

FESTUS. See here is Italy, the grave
 Of freedom slaughtered once ; who now
 Accomplishing her prophet's vow,
 In resurrection from the dead
 Uplifts her pure and graceful head,
 Content to keep her wise and brave.

LUCIFER. Oh, yes ; and here where Alp and Alp Pennine
 Force, snowy-tented, heaven : shall many a hill,
 His head with olive wreathed, and his foot bathed
 In fat of flour, and milk, ring loud with joy,
 O'er superstition's end.

FESTUS. Be not so sad,
 Since worse may happen, even here ; where Tiber, stream
 Cloud-born, of empire, rolls ; and that, the Hun,
 God's scourge, lies confined under ; may so sleep

One time, all evil beneath love's covering flood !

LUCIFER. And there lies Greece, whose soul, men say, hath fled.

FESTUS. Some god perhaps may come and raise the dead.

For birthplace once of gods ;—such, ancient Time,
Lord of the golden age ; and he, self-styled,
Monarch of space, and all celestial orbs,
Heaven, fount of light ; such Zeus the All-living One
Hight Saviour ; such the Titan sage and good,
Who upon Caucasus suffered ; birth-place, too,
Of something more than gods, philosophy ;
Art, science, polity ; what yet thence may come,
Who knows ?

LUCIFER. Not I. Time nips us.

FESTUS. Athens, home

Of heroes, and of gods Olympus, not
To stay our steps, one instant ; not to see
Parnassus, heaven of bards, nor Delphi ?

LUCIFER. No !

What hours have we to waste on gods, or, worse
By one degree,—on bards ? let heroes be.
Not he of hyperborean fame who earth
Rounded, on golden arrow, white winged, was like
To sleep more on his path. But see, the isles ;
The starry islet wandering with the wind
Once, rooted now, the cradle of twins divine ;
The Rhodian, sovereign of the sacred sea ;
God-nursing isles, isles god-entombing ; graves
Of demigods who made believe to die.

FESTUS. Legends like these, once pleased.

LUCIFER. But now,

Through yonder dark and winding rift,
Pass we, where Mounts Kropakhian lift,
Each one, his lightning-scarred, but dauntless brow ;
Hard by the sensitive fount, whose wave obeys,
With an obsequious volume, the moon's wane,
Or increment ; and that funereal spur
Of night-hued marble, that round begloms the air.
Lo ! there the unpeaceful Euxine, womb and tomb
By turns, of many nations ; nor far off
Twin cities, keys of empire, mark, blood-dyed,
Matched but by Troy of host devouring fame.
The pool Mæotic here, worshipped as god
By Scythian, and the Amazon, militant dame,
Jealous of the archer breast.

FESTUS. Away ! away !

From Pesth to Worms seems but a trot. This day
I feel the gad.

LUCIFER. But first, a double, I pray.

Norward, a time, we'll hold our course,
Thine I think is the bolder horse,
But bear him up with a harder hand ;
Rough riding this o'er *Swisserland*.

FESTUS. So all have found it, who have tried ;
 High as their Alps the people's pride,
 Never to have bowed before
 The tyrant, or the conqueror.
 One glance.

LUCIFER. Oh two I'd have thee take.

FESTUS. 'Tis Leman ; freedom's sacred lake
 Whose shores by genius hallowed, stand
 Its Eden, and its holy land.

LUCIFER. Away, away ; before thee lie
 The fields and floods of Germany ;
 From legendary Rhine, whose bed's
 The crypt of goblin gold ; hills bare,
 The Demon Shadow seems to stride ;
 Demon indeed, a man self magnified ;
 Hills, forested to their crown ; and where,
 By virgins' bones and magians' heads,
 'Gainst harm forefended, who would dare
 Attempt it, even of fiendish foes ?
 To steep Schaffhausen's seething snows,
 That know not, more than time, repose,
 To founts Danubian, and their fall
 Through the Iron Gates, behold it all !

FESTUS. Well I love thee, fatherland ;
 Sire of Europe as thou art ;
 Be free, and crouch no more, but stand ;
 Thy noblest son will take thy part.
 Oh sooner let the mountains bend
 Beneath the clouds, when tempests lower,
 Than nations stoop their sky-compeering heads
 In homage to some petty despot's power.
 The worm which suffers mincing into parts
 May sprout forth heads and tails, but grows no hearts.

LUCIFER. There lies Austria, famous land
 For fiddlesticks and sword-in-hand.

FESTUS. And Poland whom truly unhappy we call ;
 Unable to stand, unwilling to fall,
 Forge into swords thy feudal chain ;
 Smite even the souls of foes in twain ;
 The shackles have been bound in vain
 Round England's arms, and we are free,
 As the souls of our sires in heaven which be.
 That earth should have so few
 Men, fathers ! like to you !

LUCIFER. What matter who be free, or slaves ?
 For all there is one tyranny, the grave's ;—
 Or freedom, may be. On, on, haste !

FESTUS. What land is yonder wide, white, waste ?

LUCIFER. Ha ! 'tis Russia's gentle realm ;
 Whose sceptre is the sword, whose crown the helm.
 Wouldst know the difference 'twixt the bond and free ?
 'Tis that these will, those will not, liberty.

FESTUS. Truly, though strange it sound to some,
All government's by rule of thumb.

LUCIFER. Thou seest, mid air, that darling little cloud?

To us, I think, 'twill be allowed
To pass beyond, above, that we may spy
Rightly, the things which round us lie ;
From Zemlia, and the sistering islets seven,
And Thulé ultimate hiding-place of man,
By the hill Altaic, named, in the age of mounds,
The Almighty God, by Tchudic tribelets, now
In the book of nations known no more ; there, still,
Higher than lark soars, cloudlet scuds, it stands ;
To Volga, holy Boug, and warlike Don ;
Divine Alborz, the sacred mountain, site
Of the Promethean agony, where he spilled
His blood, who, a god, the end of gods foretold ;
And Caspian, 'neath whose shallowing wavelets hides
God's Eden.

FESTUS. O rich in secrets !

LUCIFER. See, where towers
Baghavan upon whose brow the holy flame
Incessant burns to Aurmazda, lord of light.

FESTUS. I swear by every atom that exists
I better love this reckless ride
O'er hill and forest, lake and river wide,
O'er sunlit plain and through the mountain mist,
Than aught thou hast given to me beside.

LUCIFER. Kerman's sands, salt-white, swept by torrid wind,
Plague-breath'd, there, see ; which, roused the desert dust,
Blinds man's bright eye, and mummifies his frame.
There oft, in arid dell, the cool suhrab
Calm mockery of sweet waters, overhung
With green and succulent shrubs, you seem to hear
The ripple of the waves, delusive lurks ;
Shamo and Koom and Kobi, Heraut ; and Balkh,
Mother of cities, murally encrowned,
Mourning mid endless ruins, but hiding yet
His marble throne, milkwhite, who of mortals king
First reigned :—shall we seek, and fit it for the last ?
Now from our Mount of prospect to descend,
Our gryphon flight 'twere better here to end,
And solid earth reseek. Bear, downwards, friend.

FESTUS. Look, my way I can only read
By the sparks from the hoof of my giant steed.

LUCIFER. There, by the gilded roof, which from afar,
Gleams o'er the desert like an earth-propped star,
Observe Thibetian L'hassa, templed seat
Of an incarnate Deity, where still
Mix Shamans and the Lama's lieges ; those
Urging the stars, and with sublime deceit
Announcing fate ; these, with machine-made prayers.
Their transmigrative God, who immanent aye

In your humanity leaps from frame to frame,
Deathless, nor ever fails.

FESTUS. Still eastwards, ho !
See what a long, long track
Of dust and fire behind ;
For leagues and leagues aback ;
And shrill and strong, as we shoot along,
Whistles and whirrs, like a forest of firs
Falling, the cold north wind.

LUCIFER. Where art thou now ?

FESTUS. In Tartar land ;
I know by the deserts of salt and sand.
Nor aim nor end hath the wandering life,
Rest reaps but rest, and strife but strife ;
With the nations round they ne'er have mixed,
For good or for ill, they stand all still,
Their bodies but rove, their minds are fixed.

LUCIFER. Miss not the chance, Manswara's lake !
The sight alone, some pilgrims say,
Immortally blessed the soul will make.
There, feast thine eyes with it, and away !

FESTUS. Father of fables, much I fear
Thy creed more liberal than sincere.

LUCIFER. Pray fancy not what I repeat
I have any faith in ; men will cheat
Their souls with legends in all ages ;
And I,—I'm only eighth of all the sages.
Start not, we are on earth's roof ridge here,
The watershed of nations, old Pamir.
Courage, we need not fall. There, Kokonoor,
Sea subterranean, once, of wandering fame ;
Here Baikal, holy lake, of mountain meres
Vastest ; and those twin pools, named eyes of heaven ;
Shelinga, there !

FESTUS. Ancestral seat, first home
Of perfected humanity, ice-chill now,
But glowing once with the heart-heat of new earth !
Haunt of the young immortal's golden years,
Ere nations boasted names, base wile ; 'twas here
The primal people of angel seed outlined
All human knowledge, taught with difference fine
Tongues of diverse roots ; wise, themselves, and free,
While culturing earth they charactered the skies ;
Their veritable divinity penned in signs
Celestial ; and in heaven's constellate lights
One natural creed eternized.

LUCIFER. So ?

FESTUS. Are these
The hills sepulchral talked of, sodden with blood
Of slaughtered henchman, slave or steed ; far round
Earth heaves with tomblets, as the sea with waves ;
These old, old wilds Kathayan ; graves as yet

By art or avarice unprofaned, where lie
Kings fameless, of unstoried states, entombed,
Forgot, together ?

LUCIFER. These ! And there, not far,
Lo ! mounds even mightier, where two summer days,
The shepherd sheik, as a lion of the sands
Lean, keen, brown-maned, shall mark both herd and flock
Content, depasture ; underfoot, the Khan,
God's shadow ; brother, may be, of the moon ;
Sole refuge of a wretched world, the whiles
He plundered, and to those who asked, gave bread,
Sceptred, and swathed within his leaf-gold shroud,
Sleeps, doubtless, sound ; though o'er that sacred head
Shrill sings the boor ; who, striding round the base,
In meditative measurement, and round,
Twirls his long lance, contemptuous of the time
He lives in ; which but likes great things, not makes.

FESTUS. And yonder see old China's wall !
Where gods of gold men's minds enthral ;
Gods whose gold's their only worth.

LUCIFER. Well, is not gold the god of earth ?

FESTUS. Whate'er, meseems, men's gifts ; their clime,
Their race, their ends, their lore, their time ;
Round earth one universal instinct reigns ;
Hear allwhere talked of, gods ; see allwhere fanes.

LUCIFER. True ; here men worship mighty Brahma ; there,
Pure Buddh alone is named in prayer ;
And yonder, nought save heaven ;
Far round, Islam hath conqueror been ;
And Moses, and the holy Nazarene,
O'er half the world hath driven.

FESTUS. I doubt not ; each of variant rite,
But all concerned with the Infinite ;
The one, the sole ; in whose kind hand
Lie all things by him formed or planned,
All orbs, all souls ; to none denied,
Save hearts of prejudice and pride,
Grace, whereby each is sanctified.
O'er all the world one faith I deem,
Howe'er unlike the expression be,
In type, tradition, liturgie,
The life immortal, God supreme.

LUCIFER. True ; and to such conclusions come,
One might almost have stayed at home.

FESTUS. A moment breathe we. Every land,
Beside the sacred trivialities
Which most the unthinking millions please,
Hath its own sanctity.

LUCIFER. Oh, I understand.

FESTUS. Here Konfutsé, pure sovereign sage, who realm
By realm, truth-seeking, knew but, named but God,
The great one, ere all nature, ere all law ;

The eternal reason that had arched the heavens ;
 The universal essence ; here Meng-tse
 Superbly taught all acts,—the human soul
 Not self-condemned by inborn pravity,
 To ever-deepening sin,—essays towards good,
 As water aye its level seeks ; here, son
 Of truth, self-styled but truthless, Lao, preached
 Of deathly souls, and pleasure's quest, life's end ;
 And, head of earthly immortals, held that God,
 From whom the world, as life from light, in death
 His gift supreme, eternal life, resumes.

LUCIFER. But now for time's sake, let us rise
 A thought superior, towards the skies ;
 We have but to reach a certain height,
 And everything appears in sight.
 See there ; one instant cast thine eye
 Where, on the world's edge, isle-crowds lie ;
 Massed nebulous ; great, small, rich in gold, spice, gems ;
 From far Nippon, where, shrined, the bull of light
 Butts first, with fiery horn, the egg mundane ;
 And Miako's gilded idol, hugest he
 Of hand-wrought gods, sits placid, to the isle
 Earth's equatorial scores as with a sword,
 Midstwise, Sumatra, hundred-citied ; seats
 Palatial boasting built by gods ; to that
 Immensest isle, gold-grounded, whose least rill
 Outbids Pactolus ; where the tameless tribes
 Witch-queened, who the boomerang hurl, dwell ; and, food-pined,
 Do mess on their own blood, disseised of sense ;
 And Tonboro, neighbour dread to the Khersonnese
 Aureate, there lying like some rich reprobate,
 With ashes strewn by stern and dominant priest,
 Ere absolute of sin : which seen, and cooled
 Our horses' feet in freshening clouds, away !

FESTUS. Lo ! southwards, hey for Hindustan ;
 The sun beats down both beast and man ;
 Herb, insect, tree, for life do gasp ;
 The river reeks, and faints the asp.
 But blithe are we, and our steeds, I trow,
 And the mane of mine yet bears the snow
 Which fell on us, by Caucasus.
 By the four beasts, but this is warm.

LUCIFER. Away, away, nor stint nor stay,
 We'll reach the sea before yon storm.

FESTUS. Wilt take the sea ?

LUCIFER. Ay, that will we
 And swim as we ride our steeds astride ;
 Come leap, leap off with me.

FESTUS. What ! from this steep, a mile above the sea ?

LUCIFER. Check not thy steed one pace, but passing glimpse
 Dhawalageri's pinnacle, earth's supreme,
 Kailas, Merou, celestial mounts, mid-sky

Dazzling their divine denizens ; Ganges, dropped,
 Tradition true, from Siva's solar eye ;
 And Chandra-bagha, holy to the moon ;
 But not for these, nor where earth's loftiest leap
 Of waters lights the forest gloom, stay we
 Our horse-flight : nay, nor for the Edenic isle,
 And peak, where foot of Buddh, the last of gods,
 Or Adam's first of men, impressed, the land
 Hallows to pilgrims desperate, of all creeds.

FESTUS. There is a rapture in the headlong leap,
 The wedge-like cleaving of the closing deep,
 A feeling full of hardihood and of power,
 With which we court the waters that devour.
 Oh ! 'tis a feeling great, sublime, supreme,
 Like the ecstatic influence of a dream,
 To speed one's way, thus, o'er the sliding plain,
 And make a kindred being with the main.

LUCIFER. By Chaos, this is gallant sport,
 A league at every breath ;
 Methinks if I ever should have to die,
 I'll ride this rate to death.

FESTUS. Away, away upon the whitening tide,
 Like lover hastening to embrace his bride,
 We hurry faster than the foam we ride ;
 Dashing aside the waves which round us cling,
 With strength like that which lifts an eagle's wing
 Where the stars dazzle and the angels sing.

LUCIFER. We scatter the spray, and break through the billows,
 As the wind makes way through the leaves of willows.

FESTUS. In vain they urge their armies to the fight ;
 Their surge-crests crumble 'neath our strokes of might.
 We meet, fear not, we mount ; now rise, now fall ;
 And dare with full-nerved arm the rage of all.
 Through anger-swollen wave, or sparkling spray,
 Nothing it recks ; we hold our perilous way
 Right onward till we feel the whirling brain
 Ring with the maddening music of the main ;
 Till the fixed eyeball strives and strains to ken,
 Yet loathes to see the shore and haunts of men ;
 And the blood half starting through each ridgy vein
 In the unwieldy hand, sets, black with pain.
 Then let the storm-king, cloud o'er cloud dissread,
 Tear the tempestuous terrors of his head :
 Let the wild sea-bird wheel around my brow,
 And shriek, and swoop, and flap her wing, as now ;
 It gladdens. On, ye boisterous billows, roll ;
 And keep my body, ye have ta'en my soul.
 Thou element, the type which God hath given
 For eyes and hearts too earthy, of his heaven ;
 Were heaven a mockery never I would mourn
 While o'er thy billows I might still be borne ;
 While yet to me the power and joy were given

To fling my breast on thine and mingle earth with heaven.

LUCIFER. 'Twas always one of my profoundest wishes,
The sea to study, and consider fishes,
And now that, well ; behold us come ;
Nor e'er before could I the time
Spare to such end, though so sublime
Let us explore the great aquarium.
Soon shall we see the denizens of the deep
Dart by us ; shapes primæval claimed by gods
Vishnu, and mixed Oannes ; ork, and whale,
The oceanic beast, whose jaws like hell's gates once
Yawned to ingulph the recreant prophet, cast
By crew forefated in the ravening deep ;
Sea-horse and seal, old ocean's flocks ; and all
That flout the whirlpool, down whose swirling maw
Voracious of all life, the shrieking ship
Plungeth ; bright dolphin, lover of the lyre,
For more than one sublime adventure starred ;
And, dubious those, behold, whom air and sea
Alternate please, now fly with fins, and now
With wings swim ; lords of richest wrecks be these ;
All who, or lonely and deathful, haunt the deeps ;
All that by coast, by firth, in endless shoal,
Vanwise, or rear, heave shoreward ; all who glide
Through streets of submerged cities, weed-draped, thronged
With waves, where, once, as in sumptuous Valipûr,
Fluctuated the courtier crowd ; through magic Ys ;
By its silver flood-gates lost ; or gilded marts
Of Vinborg, greed-fouled,—spitefully content,
Nor wink their cold white eye ; clang may the bells
Still pendulous in those tide-swept towers, as though
In calm, for prayer ; storm-clashed, for victory ; they
Reck not, nor death-peal heed ; through marble grove
Of pillars, once impalaced, as through copse
Of coralline branchery, they their wavy way
Fan flexuously ; uncharmed, unhindered, fan.

FESTUS. Land ! this the island supplement
To Africa's great continent ?

LUCIFER. Not here, not here, nor yet we land ;
Though grateful doubtless were the strand
Where nature's alms, we might the traveller's tree
Meet, in whose veins condensed the essential dew
Flows fontal ; while its flowerets, lamp-like, light
To its restful tent of leaves, the wayfarer.
One minute more. We quit the main ;
We make the shore. Here's land again ;
The Cape ! now scour o'er Afric's plain,
From the head of storms, and lion by the sea
High couchant ; and God's table, draped with clouds ;
By stream Kaffrarian, endless called, and that
Rock-brinked, which through Mataman, townless land,
Bells ; where, too, flourishes first and best of things,

So by Damaras deemed, the all-fructuous tree
 From whose far-shadowing limb-wood, human fruit
 Ripe, deathless dropped ; where, half by gumwoods girt,
 And palm, barbarian Quorra steals ; there, men
 In ivory, gold, blood, trade ; nor, far remote,
 Who the divine child, babe eterne, adore ;
 Unconscious Deity ; haste we, haste we, on.

FESTUS. Away, away, on either hand,
 Nor town nor tower, nor shade nor shower,
 Nothing save sun and sand.

LUCIFER. But here, see many a treeful tract with wood
 Well seasoned, as to feed the final fires ;
 Here, there, a naked realmlet, centred round
 Some vast baobab, like aged with ocean's tides ;
 Within whose cavernous and sepulchral trunk,
 Meet village senates, lawing peace, war, now,
 To dusky clans ; now, in its templed bole,
 The idol gods adoring of the land ;
 Arboreal fane ; some dragon-blooded tree,
 Like-yearred with the cloud-bow, or one eve, one morn,
 Than the stars younger ; ranged wherewith the stock
 That, willowy, waves above the ruined wreck
 Of Babylon, or even that, nigh Memphian well,
 Rifted yet vital, 'neath whose honoured boughs
 Paused once the sainted pair, who, angel-warned,
 Bare in their bosom o'er Zin's isthmian sands,
 An unweaned child-god, but a sapling seems
 Of yesterday.

FESTUS. What are these hills we have just
 O'ervaulted ?

LUCIFER. These, Lupata, spine o' the world
 Kumara, there, the emerald mount ; and there,
 See, there they are, I knew right soon
 We'd light on the Mountains of the Moon.
 Over them, over ; nought forbids.

FESTUS. Yonder the Nile and the Pyramids ?

LUCIFER. Nay, we can't stay to search them. Rise, good steeds :
 Let us enjoy another earthscape. See
 Louqusor, Medina Thabou ; all that rests
 Of hundred-palaced Thebes, where, shrineless, dwelt
 One who supreme, the unknown, the invisible reigned
 'Midst many idolatrous, o'er one tribe devout,
 Godwise ; and long ere cometary earth
 The stars disturbed, with presages of woe
 To heaven's great family, in herself to be
 Concentrate, and accomplished to the death,
 As in a fiery vortex, himself named
 To worshipping worlds, as here, the imageless,
 The infinite, the eternal. There, behold,
 O'er the Erythræan gulf dyed red with blood
 Of Pharaoh's hosts, the free, wide sandy wastes
 Of kingless Arabia ; Mecca, seat of power

Prophetic, and the city of the tomb,
By angels haunted.

FESTUS. And thy sacred well,
Seem I to recognise from storying pens,
Divine Zemzem, from founts celestial strained
Through astral strata, and the musky loam
Of Paradise ; whence moonbrowed maids of light,
Fearless, their life-cups fill with bliss.

LUCIFER. And there,
El Kodsh, and substitutive mosque, rock-based,
Upon whose crest, intempled now, shall stand
The archangel stern, when he, by judgment trump
All souls shall summon ; and with fate-fraught rod
Inevitable, call forth what Hades holds.
Here, well-walled Joppa, towered before the flood ;
There, Tyre, where once Astarte, round the earth
Pacing, moonlike, a star, picked up new fallen,
Which she, at her own altar, stretching out
Her sceptral cross, to herself hallowed. There,
Once, Olybama rose ; there, Cenosh ; home
Of the giant race, earth dominating, sites now
Sightless to all save eyes endowed like thine.
Here, Byblos, Orchœe there ; Bab-El, God's gate,
Where hides mayhap 'neath thunder-thwarted pile,
With archives of mid earth's initial throne,
The foreworld's infant speech ; here Nin-evech,
There Arach, Arkite city of the moon ;
Whose golden-crownèd shades shall all precede
Kingly, at doom ; though Persargadae's graves,
Roman, and Russ, and Norman's castled tomb
Yield up their tyrannous ghosts ; his even who yet
In sepulchre secrete still lies ; and once,
Mid alabastrine halls, approached through forms
Cherubic, of ubiquitous wing, now, see,
In unearthed sculpture, leagues a thousand hence,
Divining 'fore his gods, with wine ; or, now
Immingling arrows, mark him draw, perchance,
Self-sought, his fiery fate ; and if, more near,
Thine eye still keep its edge, that wandering vill,
Builded, men say, in test of faith, times passed,
Mid Arab wilds, by great Shedaad, whose walls
In tiers alternate towered of silver and gold ;
Invisible since to dulled belief. Dost see it ?

FESTUS. Is't now a structural mass, dream-like out-drawn
In vanishing perspective, with pillars winged,
Translucent, quivering up like columned air
Of resurrective dew, sunfired ; dim domes,
And spacious sanctuaries ? Or, plainer now,
Is it like a shadowy palace, rich in rest,
The feverous brain of worn-out traveller draws
Upon the heatful noon, that as with glimpse
Of comforting things allures, but while we move

Nearer, retreats?

LUCIFER. Ah, good ; thou seest it not.
 Turn, sudden now, and coast this midland sea,
 By Carthage, Barca, Tripoli ;
 Crete, there, Jove's grave ; there, Sicily,
 Isle of the sun, whence Hades' equal pride ;
 And 'twixt whose templed cliffs and us, that barque,
 Laden with the sack of Rome, tyrannic queen
 Of bonded nations—the tile-gilded roof
 Of Jove's high capitol ; the seven-starred lamp
 And golden table of God's own temple, won
 By Vandal king self-crowned of earth and sea,
 And their affiliate iles,—storm-sunk, but served,
 With ivory thrones, and busts marmoreal, gems
 And jewelled caskets, armlets, torques, and rings,
 And carquanets impearled, and coffered coin
 Of conquered states, to startle, or to adorn
 Sicilian sea-nymphs in their billowy play.
 By Syrta Cyrenean now we hie,
 By Atlas range and Barbary ;
 By the desert heart of slave-land ; waterless sea,
 Where tide once haply broke tempestuous, now
 Heaves, ponderous, the slow sand-wave, stormy dust
 Scattering in poisonous clouds.

FESTUS. Not far I deem
 The Hesperidean gardens, serpent-watched
 Once, watched in vain. The honeyed opiate, there,
 Was quite too much.

LUCIFER. The land of serpents this ;
 Haunted by adder, cockatrice, those the Moor
 Wreathes round his limbs, or, in his bosom, curled
 Confederate, cades ; those that, by glistening glance,
 Charmed song-birds to their death transfix ; or those
 More fascinate, that oft the innocent breath
 Of babes, suck, viperously, away ; and once,
 By him enormous, on these banks, just cleared,
 Of Bagradas ; who, memorable worm,
 Rome's hosts braved singly ; singly suffered siege ;
 War waged ; till by arblast and by catapult,
 And burning darts, self-firing as they flew,
 Quelled, he at last capitulates with death ;
 His shining slough to swell the conqueror's pomp.

FESTUS. A learned demon past all contradiction.

LUCIFER. Why, look ; I'm naturally strong in fiction.
 And then it rather piques one to describe
 The triumphs of the serpent tribe ;
 Whether of cobras, god-kinned, thought to have missed
 Their way from heaven ; or crownèd basilisk, type
 Of demon good, and mundane genius ; such
 As round his healthful staff Asclepios twined,
 And saviour named ; or such, perchance, as now
 Mid Caesarean isle, 'neath mound tower-topped,

Lies tombed, redoubtable dragon ; be the tale
Not rather told of ethnic faith, o'erthrown
By conquering cross.

FESTUS. Their crown is, to have striven.

LUCIFER. See Mong Mæsoha, Mount of God, first marked
Of Punic mariner, when from seas unkeeled
Since Argo, or dark diluvian barge, as car
Of gods he hailed it, once fire-ringed ; of flame,
Of fume, even, naked now. And now still on !

FESTUS. Hurrah ! by my soul at every bound,
I feel, I see the earth rush round ;
I see the mountains slide away,
That side night, and this side, day.

LUCIFER. Wilt see the New World ?

FESTUS. Well ; a peep.

LUCIFER. One dainty run, then ; one more leap
And lo ! we quit this lion ground,
Plunging from palmy steep, once more into the deep.

FESTUS. To cross indeed the Atlantic tide,
And far as southmost Fire-land ride,
Would I, if time be ours.

LUCIFER. Oh, plenty ;
Be there, too, ere we reckon twenty.

FESTUS. The sea again, the swift bright sea !

LUCIFER. Hold hard ; give rein ; and follow me.
See there, the Elysian islets, of eld thought
Home for the heroic blessed, who years divine
Enjoyed, and life eternal as of heaven ;
Now, only fortunate deemed, their mountlets crowned
By that beneficent stem, whose top, with clouds
Nightly encompassed, soon as morning beams,
From leaf and ramage sheddeth cool bright showers,
Freshening the fountless soil ; matron and maid,
God thanking for his daily boon, with joy
Brim high their globular gourds from every bough.

FESTUS. It is somewhere hereabouts I count to have heard
Of other happy spots being found.

LUCIFER. No lack
Of such demesnes ; the winged isle, to wit,
Walled high with gold-bright crystal, giant kinged,
Round the world flying, oft-sighted, good ; but found ?

FESTUS. And Bolotoo, joint paradise of gods
And men, 'mid ocean isolate, land of shades ;
Where, to chance wanderer for the future bound,
And for lost secrets searching, all spent thought
There hoarded, temple, tower, and grove-clad hill
Show but forms permeable ; through all he stalks
As through a solid vision ; wall, cliff, bark,
Close round him, as over diving gull the main.

LUCIFER. 'Tis odds we have gone through it, and not known.

FESTUS. Look ; listen. There is music in the cave
Where ocean sleeps, and brightness in the wave

The sea-bird makes its pillow, and the star,
 Last born of heaven, its azure mirror ; far
 And wide, the pale, fine gleam of sea-fire glows,
 Softly sublime, like lightnings in repose ;
 Till roused anon, afar its flaming spray it throws.

LUCIFER. Well, now we have travelled above the waves,
 Wilt travel a time beneath ?

And visit the sea-born in their caves ;
 And look on the rainbow-tinted wreath
 Of weed ; pearl-starred, and gemmed, wherewith
 The mermaid binds her long, green hair ?
 Or rouse the sea-snake from his lair !
 See where he gambols for us there !

FESTUS. Ay, ay ; down let us dive.

LUCIFER. Look up ; we lack not stars, I swear ;
 And every star thou seest's alive ;
 A little globe of life, light, love ;
 Whose every atom is a living being,
 Each into other's bosom seeing ;
 Each enlightening the other.

FESTUS. Oh how unlike man's world above,
 Where mainly, vainly, each must strive
 To dim, or to outshine his brother.
 Would only I were ocean's son,
 The solitary brave,
 Like yon sea-snake,—no end hath he
 To fear because his soul is free,
 No future heaven to crave,
 Whose life's but to sun all his folds upon
 The crest of the highest wave.

LUCIFER. Yon reptile men call serpent of the sea,
 Eldritch, huge, ocean-churner, hight in Ind,
 In Norland, world-circler ; whose hoary mane
 And visage, sadly human, reared mast-high,
 Till suddenly down implunged, it disappearing,
 Appals the homebound mariner, as at eve
 Rounding his last of headlands blue, he weens
 In its eye to have hailed some Pharos, newly erect,
 May be less caitiff than he looks.

FESTUS. Enough

I have seen of him ; some fathoms.

LUCIFER. Know this soil
 Thou treadst, the continent, once, in ages passed,
 Neptunian, where the sea-god righteous ruled,
 And his sons ten ; here, trace the beds of streams
 Foreworldly, such as with voluminous surge
 Atlantis cantoned, and, in main long lost,
 Their tuskly spoil disbogued ; or, swollen with doom
 Of yearly freshet, scared the rock-scooped booths
 Of savage tribelets trembling ; there, the bounds
 Mark, once of jealous states war-mad, all stilled
 By watery and necessitous peace, unhopd,

Unlooked for ; here, the isle Triphylian Jove
Judged from his imminent chair.

FESTUS. And now behold
Drowned lands and verdurous meadows submarine,
Where water turtles wander, pasturing free.

LUCIFER, Come on, come on ; the dew, last night
Was heavy.

FESTUS. Are those spars, so bright,
Or eyes of things which ne'er forgive
That seem to play on us, and glare
With rage, that we so far should dare
To search the hidden depths
Where tide, the moon-slave, sleeps ;
And ork, and kraken, world-forgotten, live ?
Where the wind breathes not, and the wave
Walks softly, as above a grave ;
Where coral worms, in countless nations,
Build rocks up from the sea's foundations ;
Where the islands strike their roots
Far from the old main-land ;
And spring like desert fruits,
Shook off by God's strong hand,
Up from their bed of sand.

LUCIFER. There ; now we stand on the world's end land ;
Over the hills, away we go ;
Through fire and snow, and rivers whereto
All others are rills.

FESTUS. Through the lands of silver, the lands of gold ;
Through lands untrodden, and lands untold ;
Lands where his age-long skirmish still maintains
The conquering Araucanian ; who from his bounds
The pale face waiving aye, still, manly, serves
The world's essential Spirit ; and on whose shore
The mount of thunder, o'er the orb-wrecking flood
Soul buoyant of all things, self-steered, in times
Long gone, first grounding, paused ; then ceased, content ;
Ceased, from its world-wide wanderings ; lands where trined
With sun and moon eterne, the rainbow, dream
Of the elements, was adored. Near by, of old,
A marvellous hill towered ; is't, I wonder, now ?
That crystal mount, cloud-crested, once which stood
In western Tucuman, with acute reply
Answering the solar messages of light,
As equal, equal ? deep below its base,
O'erarched, a river navigable will run.

LUCIFER. Nay, if 'twas ever here, it is here, this hour
Lo ! Andes, outer wall of earth ; and here
Light-wise, in pardonable idolatry,
Pure Pachacamac, lord of the universe,
By kingly Yngas was adored, and choirs
Sun-dedicated, of virgins ; fairer they
Than all the flowers their golden gardens grew ;

Or silvern shrubs scarce imitative, and gemmed
 With ruby bud or beryl, could show. And now,
 Nor mine, nor mountain lake though choked with gold,
 Like Titicaca, from whose sacred shores
 Long ages lapsed ; the scions of the sun,
 Mango Capac and Mama Oëlllo, stepped
 Ancestral, to the sceptre of Berou,
 Our course must stay ; nor yet, though nigh, the spot
 Where that unbearded brood,—whose gnarled knees
 Ranked level with the poll of general men ;
 Whose eyen glared like shields rimmed round with brass ;
 Where fell their shadow grass nor floweret grew ;
 At sight of whom men swooned and women died ;
 Debarked ; whence God best knoweth, here at foot
 Of Andes' highest ; but them, his vengeance roused
 For vast offence—a fiery falchion quelled ;
 Sudden it swept from heaven, and in one swathe
 Laid all their giant trunks.

FESTUS. What sin was theirs ?

LUCIFER. The story's quite apocryphal, I admit ;
 'Tis nothing, maybe, but a round, sound, lie ;
 Who told it first, is answerable.

FESTUS. Thou, too.

Words are deeds spoken. Aught we do is writ
 Brief-wise in God's eternal diary.
 All acts seem echoed to the skies. We live
 As in a bell.

LUCIFER. Meanwhile, be it ours to hie
 Unstayed by aught above earth, or beneath,
 Not even by bass of rivers subterrene,
 Booming through caves, each with his several roar,
 I hear them plain, down to earth's focal fires,
 Still inextinct, and flaming floods ; whence dashed,
 They reascend volcanic, melted with ice,
 Lava, and fishy mud, and so explode
 Vaporous, the solid hills ; by the mount of stars ;
 By Chuquibamba's cone of carmined snow ;
 And Rumpurini's demon cliff, dark browed
 With wood self-procreate, must we swiften on,
 To the equatorial groves that mat the shores
 Of Maracaybo, and Maragnon's tide,
 The sea's tide mastering ; Temi, gold-dyed stream,
 And falls of Tequendama ; rent ere yet
 The moon rode, æry.

FESTUS. Haste we !

LUCIFER. Nature, here,

Of life like lavish as the sun of light,
 Leaves all this foodful paradise unbarred,
 Ungated even ; while almost every tree
 Hangs heavy with vital bread, man's simplest board ;
 Or fruit lactifluous, from whose flower-tipped stem,
 High trembling, the earth-gorged Indian, thirstful, drains

At sundown, creamy draughts ; to all his kin
Dispensing, patriarchal, bowl on bowl.

FESTUS. Our high road narrows shrewdly, here ;
A stumble might—

LUCIFER. Bah ! what a tale !
Thy pad is surefoot, past all fear ;
And mine ; well, when shall Darkness fail ?
But see ; not oft the eye comprises,
Not even when quickened to embrace
A circle wish-wide of pure space,
View fairer than upon our vision rises.
Behold the isle-gemmed western sea ;
Black Hayti, once the imperial negro's throne ;
Bahamas, and the Virgins, those to lee ;
And that, of all earth's westlands earliest known.

FESTUS. This road's a trifle rugged.

LUCIFER. On !
We have far to prance ere the hour is gone.
By strait and bay, by swamp and plain
Through torrent flood ; through hurricane ;
Have we our pathless course to find.

FESTUS. As quick we ride, on either side,
Atlantic or Pacific tide,
Thoughts legendary of spots where hide
The Aztek's mythic realms, come o'er the mind ;
Coy Iximaya, and the precipitous gates
Of that recondite capital, mountain scarped,
Of sacred dwarf-kings, haply, with all theirs
To vanish into cloudland, doomed ; thenceforth
With ghosts, of fabulous crowns, such ghosts as haunt,
Easeless, the cots of nations, walk for aye.

LUCIFER. So many rarities will be lost, one day,
No need to moan for a trinket like a town.
See here, Copan's, Uxmal's insculptured domes,
Mysterious, tombed alive in matted woods,
Buried erect, unruinous : here, the toils
Combined of royal patriots, and leal crowds,
All limbs who strained to upbuild, and their throats tore
To applaud, complete, what now the bat, the snake,
The wight who hath lost his way, alone know ; there,
Serf-reared, the fire fanes of Palenque, cross-famed,
And towers she-eagles nest on imperturbed ;
Cholula's terraced pyramid, and those vast,
Mid pathway of the dead, to sun and moon
Hallowed, o'er minor mounds more mean than stars
Which rise, supreme ; Subtiaba's palaces ;
Cities and holds of dynasties unknown ;
Less glorious, may be, than the soldans named
By proud Fardusi, paradisal bard ;
Less numerous, not ; who natural signs here graven,
Charged with intensest meaning, now all lost ;
Wrecked on some rock uncharted in time's flood,

No ebb shall e'er dismask.

FESTUS.

But little seems

To hinder, or to attract.

LUCIFER.

Wood, river, lake,

Earth's widest, mightiest, spread around,

Beset in vain the path we take,

Intent alone to gain our starting ground.

Some pools, indeed, we'll pass, ere the hoar woods

Of growth eternal, continental reach,

That all enclose,—from florid lands which seas

Columbian lave, to gold-rocked Labrador ;

From ocean's gilded sands, by Kalamath,

To silveriest Secklong, we have overswept.

FESTUS. There's a dark cloud of slaves, which mars ;

But look ! it lifts beneath one's eyes,

The fairest views that round us rise ;

Though nought shall blot the bannered stars,

From freedom's skies.

LUCIFER. Here the Aztek's, bowered with floating pleasancess

Where sailed the swans of sway symbolic ; see,

There Yutah's lake, where the polygamous crew,—

Misled by one self-unctioned, not anoint

Of genius, nor from world-life spiritual, strained ;

Who from the brook, the lines of lacquered lead

Sham angel forged, dug out ; who, after, fell

Death-shotten, with Cæsar's trickling wounds thrice told ;

Ill doer he, ill done by,—their starred hour

Dreadless abide, of doom. Here note these hills

With cedars prediluvian, towerlike, crowned ;

And yon demarking gap, far blazed through woods,

Where day begins, and east from west divides.

FESTUS. I would yon shining chain of waters, now

Slave, Athabaskan, down to the Huron, coast.

LUCIFER. Mark, too, those mightiest rivers, tributaries

From Firm-land to their Sea-lord ; there, not far,

Ohio broadens ; here, gross Missouri dims

The deepening sire of floods, aye tiding on

His current deluge to the ingulphing breast

Of central seas ; he, clearing oft his banks

Of secular secrets, too long kept, strange frames

Of mammoth shows, or kindred monster ; brutes

Dreadest, whose teeth might nigh with tombstones match ;

Limbed, like an oak ; but all swept off by heaven,

Creation at the flood revising : such

Burial made they and osseous monument,

To themselves, 'mid riverine swamps ; swamps, too, the snake

By red men hallowed, haunts, which multiplies

Annual, its rattling rings ; and once, which hid

Nigh sacred well, by priestly craft, the man

Divine, to all of irksome sanctity, fanged

To the death ; and so, held amiablest of worms,

And kin, by common treachery, to mankind.

FESTUS. What mean these mounds we skim shaped animal-wise,
Turtle's, wolf's, serpent's, favouring, or uncouth,
The vulture's wide-winged brotherhood of death ?

LUCIFER. Clan-roots of nations these, one common source
Shadowing, and, reared ere all imburghing walls,¹
By stalwarth savages, in arts of life
Less skilled than feats of death, and who, where now
State-capitals stand, hounded the hills ; as, far
Eastwards, in older sphere, and stony shape
Snake-headed, volumed over downs, and piled,
Progressive, from the Aleutians to the Basque,
Dracontian fanes, oracular logan, cirque
Slab-pillared, tell one vast and simple faith,
Rudely divine ; perchance, from heaven. But now,
To reach where Erie through Niagara hurls
Precipitant all her thunderous waters down
His crescent steep, and so to Ontario breaks
A continent's discontent which else, bulged up,
Might the whole Firm-land flood.

FESTUS. One sound all drowns :
'Tis as Earth's tongue.

LUCIFER. Ah ! Ice now and snow
And frozen firth our echoing hoofs invite
Towards the sacred grove to Esquimo known,
Whence, chipped by giant woodman, man and brute
Fell earthwards, upwards, birds, in sea dropped, fish ;
So fable Arctic folk, tribes sparse and spare ;
Whose crooked crones, in glittering huts of ice,
When the vivific sun, world conqueror, ends
Yearly his serpent path, in silent snow
His thunder hiding,—to their home-cloyed youth,
Sharpening the bone-tipped shaft for morse, or seal,
Quaint legends gabble of primal Eld. But see !
Here we are not sole travellers.

FESTUS. Ah ! yon sledge.
Half hound's land this ; brave hound ; of souls create
Sub-human gifted highest, most to man
Faithful,—both where the auroral arch o'erbroods
Graves lost, unsearched for not, and the city's heart,
Through life to his last sigh ; and so, worthy judged
Such skiey deathlessness as men can give,
Or dogs divine, of Dian's nebulous chase,
Can joy in, led by their leash of light ; or he,
Staunch grew, man-hearted, starred in holiest writ,
Who, burning, bays Orion's spacious steps ;
Or good Dherreem, sung in the mighty war,
'Twixt chiefs of lunar lineage, and the sun's,
For the empery of Ind ;—four-footed friend
To righteous rajah ; he, that kingly kin
All blessed and deified,—lonely left, at last
Shakes off, disguiseful test, the shape canine,
And shines heaven's primal virtue, peer of gods.

LUCIFER. Take credit for quite candid praise :
Nor dogs need we, nor sluggard sleighs.

FESTUS. I feel the iron in my blood
Drawn curiously towards the Pole ;
But oh this cold congeals me ; and 'twere good,
All said and done, to make our goal.

LUCIFER. Thou carest not, then, to tread the terrible ways
Which lead to nature's mightiest mysteries, down
To the humming axis of these surface lands,
Where, earth-guiding, the magnet mountain stands,
Brainlike, ensconced beneath her snowy crown.

FESTUS. Not now ; as yet, enough to view
Earth's outward.

LUCIFER. So then, hence !

FESTUS. Adieu
America, thou, half-brother of the world ;
With something good and bad of every land ;
Greater than thee have lost their seat ;
Greater scarce none can stand.

LUCIFER. Just touch the Arctic ring will we ;
For our horses snort and snuff the sea,
And pant for where they ought to be.

FESTUS. Well, here's the sea ; and as we flew in,
I said, let Darkness follow Ruin.

LUCIFER. 'Twas right, spur on. Come, Darkness, come,
Think of thy well-strown stall.

FESTUS. And Ruin ?

LUCIFER. Oh yes ; there's a stable-home
For Ruin, too, after all.

FESTUS. For me, I fear no fate to come,
Not that which bids me fall.
Oh happy, if at last I lie
Within some pearled and coralled cave ;
Where high o'erhead the booming surge,
And moaning billow, shall chant my dirge ;
And the storm-blast, as it hurrieth by,
Shall, answering, howl to the mermaid's sigh,
And the nightwind's mournful minstrelsy,
Their requiem over my grave.

LUCIFER. Through morn and midnight, sunset and high noon,
One hour hath ta'en us ; o'er all land and sea,
O'er earthquake opening, and iceberg have we
Swept in swift safety.

FESTUS. Hour, o'er now, too soon.
Greenland and Iceland far a-lee ;
The crests of mountains now I see
Through rolling mists, grey-gilded, burst ;
And islands still beloved by me ;
Ben Loda, mount of God, and Nevis, first
Saluted of the sun ; and, Erin's isle
Westmost whereon day's lord his parting smile
Through groves of worship, dedicate to fate,

Utters, ere yet, kinglike, in fickle state
He turns to flatterers of his greeting ray.

LUCIFER. There, see the causeway, we'll not foot, to-day,
Of giants, who from Ierne through deep sea,
By long columnar jetty, and pillared pier
Basaltic, crystal-capped, and close as canes
In Javan jungle, treacherous access sought
To Albyn's kingly clans, and fate-stoned throne;
'Twixt Erin, thence, and Cambria steer
The lands are close, but be it known
I have been in sharper straits ere now.

FESTUS. See Snowden's bossy back, and more
Remote, in ice, and snow-light hoar
Plinlimmon's ravine-wrinkled brow.

LUCIFER. By Severn's sea our sinuous course now bends;
Yon windy cliff, your isle of isles that ends;
And Lizard porphyry caved.

FESTUS. 'Twas here of old,
And old world tales the air load, gods uncouth,
Ogres iniquitous, dwelled, whom Corin, proud
Of Tyrrhene monsters slain, slew, and at once
Sheer o'er the crags dashed; Cormoran, and those vile,
Whose far descendant Rhytho, Uther's son
Brained with red brand on the high Cornubian mount
That still o'erpeers the Atlantic; once, as well,
The Llionnese viewed, and all the Armoric shore
Inundate now for aye, but haunt of brood
Like these enorme, in lays chivalric famed;
Who in towers of brass abode, or burnished steel,
That all the region round imblazed; with throng
Of damsels dungeoned, and brave knights unhorsed;
Fire-breathing dragons, guardians of their gates;
But all, in fine, by some proud paladin
Of table round, or peer imperial quelled.

LUCIFER. Behold the common narrow sea,
Which like a strong man's arm,
Keeps back two foes whose lips, wrath-white,
Prove hearts with rage oft warm.
It is very sure, this land we near
Should all things take their natural course,
Sometime in sea will disappear.

FESTUS. And if they do, it might be worse;
In peace and war she is with the sea,
By fate conjoined inseparably.
How shall my country fight,
When her foes rise against her;
But with thine arm, O sea,
The arm which thou lentst her?
Where shall my country be buried,
When bounden to die?
Let her choose out her place in the spheres,
Where she shall lie.

She hath brethren more than a hundred,
 And they all crave room ;
 They may die, and may lie where they live ;
 They shall not mix with her doom.
 Where, but within thine arms, O sea, O sea ?
 Wherein she hath lived and gloried, let her rest be.
 When we dream of her end, and her tomb,
 We will rise, and will say to the sea, Flow over her ;
 We will cry to the death of the deep, Cover her.
 England, my country, great and free,
 Heart of the world, I leap to thee.

LUCIFER. It's land ; and that's enough for me.

FESTUS. What were the world's without thine history ?

Let faith her rites, her creeds to Israel trace ;
 Earth's lore, earth's art, let flow from Græcia's race ;
 Owe Christendom to Rome its states, its laws ;
 The freedom of mankind is England's cause.
 To science, learning, law, religion, she
 Adds nature's grace supreme, of liberty.
 Mother of empire, native to command,—
 Whose stern self-rule to ficker realms makes known
 A love which serves, but serving, awes, the throne ;
 Hope, yet, and aid, of thrall, in every land ;
 She first refused with slavery to defile
 Her shores ; and God looked down, and blessed the Isle ;
 Saying :—In this cause, Albion, fare thou forth ;
 Thy fleets, thy hosts, thy peoples, round the earth ;
 Elect of powers ! be first in wealth, as worth ;
 To lands less blessed teach thou fair freedom's charms ;
 Fear not the snares of peace ; nor war's alarms ;
 And leave with heaven the issue of Our arms.

LUCIFER. 'Tis not for that, she is dear to me,
 What I admire is her humility.

FESTUS. Sanctuary of peace and song ; of toil colleagued
 With science, ever largening this, like the orb
 Loaded with golden rain of annual stars,
 Preponderative, prolific ; kingly wealth
 Bringing to many a black mechanic burgh
 Gas-breath'd, steam-pulsed ; and which, by day obscure,
 Strangely at night, bright, oft to star-seer skilled,
 Who in neighbouring planet notes, maybe, with lens
 Than ours more potent, earth's pale spherelet, gives
 Sore brain-ache to divine ;—isle, with all charms
 Natural and social blessed : here, cultured plain,
 Green hill, there ; grainy level, and fruit-fraught vale ;
 Downs, dear to freedom ; dim and misty moor,
 Where aches the eye with objectless survey ;
 And long dun moss, by cairn or comlech crowned ;
 Or lithic dance of giants, 'neath the moon ;
 Hurlers, or wrestlers, who by sport profaned
 Hours holy ; or bridal revellers, like beguiled,
 That, scornful of Sabbatic peace, till primes,

Footed their fool's reel ; and so, fitly earned
 Their stony transformation ; days of rest
 Are theirs, now, unpervert ; now, o'er their ears,
 The gold-stacked thunder-pipes grave anthems drone,
 And voluntaries, in vain ; in vain to them
 Church-chimes, for aye.

LUCIFER. Indeed 'tis very sad.
 Legends are these quite touching in their tone :
 Instructive, too, remark, when left alone.
 Now get on land ; quick, hie along ;
 O'er forest, copse, and glade ;
 We have but a league or two more to go,
 Before our journey's made ;
 With speed that flings the sun into the shade.

FESTUS. See the gold sunshine, patching,
 And streaming and streaking across
 The grey-green oaks ; and catching,
 By its long brown beard, the moss.

LUCIFER. I have shown thee as I promised, *earth*,
 That rightly thou mightst count its worth,
 To have and hold. To me it seems
 Like valuable with last month's dreams.

FESTUS. It favours virtue to have been
 But witness of a glorious scene,
 Where truth hath taught, and wisdom dwelt ;
 Where freedom fought, and faith aspired
 To earn the love her soul desired ;
 Where right hath triumphed, wrong hath knelt ;
 And peace the heaven diffused she felt.

LUCIFER. It may be. Should I find it so,
 Another time, and elsewhere, thou shalt know.
 But now ; ah, here's an open plain ;
 Here, we'll get down.
 Away, good steeds : be off, again.

FESTUS. We must be near to town.
 I am bound to thee for ever
 By the pleasure of this day ;
 Henceforth let us never sever,
 Come what come may.

XI.

After travel, homelier life,
 A country merry-making, a village feast
 May even please, where, with the local world
 We mix in private; seriously converse
 Of light things, lightly enough of serious. Skilled
 To revive dead lore, and magnify extinct
 Arts, and extol symbolic wisdom, here
 The world-man in the student finds a friend.
 Henceforth a power in life, or open, or hid,
 The new star mounts the mid-sky; from his stance
 Acts fateful; now opposing, now conjoined.
 Record of strange spheres hear, scarce stranger still
 Than ours. Let hope just thought of deathless soul
 Kind Deity, and the dole which aye itself
 Reerowns from ruin's fruit, form. Spirit is here
 As at dead water balanced: back no more
 Can it; advance 'twill not. How ends the strife?
 Weight well with worlds the star-scale, and with ends
 Incompassable of man unhelped, who'd win
 This soul.

A Village Feast. Evening Twilight.

FESTUS and LUCIFER. *Afterwards* OTHERS.

FESTUS. It is getting dark. One has to walk quite close
 To see the pretty faces that we meet.

LUCIFER. A disagreeable necessity, most
 Truly.

FESTUS. We'll rest upon this bridge. I'm tired.
 Yon tall slim tree! does it not seem as made
 For its place just there, a kind of natural maypole?
 Beyond, the lighted stalls with the good things stored
 Of childhood's simple world: and behind them
 The shouting showman, and the clashing cymbal;
 The open-doored cottages and blazing hearths;
 The little ones running up with naked feet,
 And cake in either hand, to their mother's lap;
 Old and young laughing; schoolboys with their playthings;
 Clowns cracking jokes; and lasses with sly eyes,
 And the smile settling on their sun-flecked cheek,
 Like noon upon the mellow apricot;
 Make up a scene I can for once give in to;
 It must please all, the social and the selfish.
 Are they not happy?

LUCIFER. Why, what matters it?
 They seem so: that's enough.

FESTUS. But not the same.

LUCIFER. Yet truth and falsehood meet in seeming, like
 The falling leaf and shadow on the pool's face.
 And these are joys like beauty, but skin deep.

FESTUS. Remove all such, and what's the joy of earth?
 It is they create the appetite for life;

Give zest and relish to the lot of millions.
And take the gust for them away, what's left ?
A skeleton of existence, soulless, mean.

LUCIFER. It is pleasure men prefer to power. To stoop
Is easier than to climb ; and power's above,
Pleasure, below the soul. They are but few
Who feel not, this, a weakness, that a woe.

(Children at play.)

FESTUS. Play away, good ones. I could romp with you.
To look, sometimes, upon a child's fair face
Such innocence, outward and intense, of life,
Is resurrection to the heart ; and oft,
To those who mole-like grope through an earthy life,
What know they else so indicative of heaven,
So vast in blessing, as these god-sent kings
And queens, according to love's dynasties ?
The might and the delight of nations lies
In them, and 'tis for them earth's what it is.

LUCIFER. Another row of dragon's teeth, a row
Of grinders, look ye.

AN OLD MAN. Pity the poor blind man.

FESTUS. Here is substantial pity.

OLD MAN. Heaven reward you.

FESTUS. Blind as the blue skies after sunset ! Blind !
Well I too tire of looking upon what is.
One might as well see beauty never more,
As view with empty eye. Would all were over !
Our pleasures leave us, as sighs leave the heart,
Though each sigh leaves it lower ; still relieved.
Nought happens but what happens to oneself.
It is sad to think how few life's pleasures are,
Wherefor men risk eternal good. What else,
One's self except, one's self can satisfy ?

LUCIFER. Too much, soon tells its tale. I quite feel for you.

FESTUS. It is sad success, to antedate life, and reap
'Gainst rule, one's field, ere noon. For what results
But laborous restitution, sowing, reaping,
Losing again ? Such toil, such gain alike,
Tire. Live too slowly, can we, to be good,
And happy ?

LUCIFER. Nay, how suddenly wise !

FESTUS. But youth,
Burning to forestall nature, will not wait Time,
Stern sculls-man with his barge, to ferry it o'er
Life's stream, but flings itself into the flood,
Intolerantly, and perisheth. Well, what charm's
In time, as time, what good ? Are longest days
Happier than short ones ? What then can age offer ?
It is sometime now since I was here. We leave
Our home in youth—no matter to what end ;
Study—or strife—or pleasure, or what not ;
And coming back in few short years, we find

All as we left it, outside ; the old elms,
 The house, grass, gates, and latchet's self-same click ;
 But lift that latchet,—all is changed as doom :
 The servants have forgotten our step, and more
 Than half of those who knew us know us not.
 Adversity, prosperity, the grave,
 Play a round game with friends. On some the world
 Hath shot its evil eye, and they are passed
 From honour and remembrance ; and a stare
 Is all the mention of their names receives ;
 And people know no more of them than they know
 The shapes of clouds at midnight, a year hence.

LUCIFER. Let us move on to where the dancing is ;
 We soon shall see how happy they all are.
 Here is a loving couple quarrelling ;
 And there, another. It is quite distressing.
 See yonder. Two men fighting !

FESTUS. What avail
 These vile exceptions to the rule of joy ?

LUCIFER. Behold the happiness of which thou spakest !
 The highest hills are miles below the sky ;
 And so far is the lightest heart below
 True happiness.

FESTUS. To one who knows so well
 What that is, doubtless 'tis a snake-like world,
 Tail aye in mouth, as if it ate itself,
 And moralled time. To others kindlier masked,
 A make-believing cheat, it shows ; to me,
 The world seems like yon children's merry-go-round ;
 What men admire are carriages and hobbies,
 Which the exalted manikins enjoy.
 There is a noisy ragged crowd below
 Of urchins drives it round, who only get
 The excitement for their pains—best gain perhaps ;
 For it is not they who labour that grow dizzy
 Nor sick ; that's for the idle proud, above ;
 Who soon dismount, more weary of enjoying,
 Than those below of working ; and but fair.
 It is wretchedness or recklessness alone
 Keeps us alive. Were we happy we should die.
 Yet what is death ? I like to think on death :
 It is but the appearance of an apparition.
 One ought to tremble ; but oughts stand for nothing.
 I hate the thought of wrinkling up to rest ;
 The toothlike, aching, ruin of the body,
 With the heart all out, and nothing left but edge.
 Give me the long high bounding sense of life,
 Which cries, let me but leap into my grave,
 And I'll not mind the when, nor where. We never
 Care less for life than when enjoying it.
 Youth, youth, shrink not to die. What is, to die ?
 I cannot grasp the meaning more than can

An oak's arms clasp the blast that blows upon it.
 There is an air-like something which must be,
 And yet not to be seen, nor to be touched.
 I am bound to die ; for having been to myself
 Every thing, there is nothing left but nothing,
 To be again.

LUCIFER. Hark ! here's a ballad-singer.

BALLAD-SINGER. All of my own composing !

FESTUS.

Yes, yes—we know.

FARMER. The Gypsy maid ! We have had that, ten times over.
 She is gone. Glad were we, would the whole tribe follow,
 Nor come again.

GIRL. I mind it well ; and oft
 I wonder if the tale it tells be true.

BALLAD-SINGER. Every man's life hath its apocrypha.
 Mine has, at least. I have said more than need be,
 It happened too when I was very young.

We never meet such gipsies when we are old.
 And yet we more complain of age than youth.

LUCIFER. Another, please, not quite so gloomy, friend ;
 I dare say, you have ditties by the score.

BALLAD-SINGER. I dare say, but you want a merrier ?

LUCIFER.

Yes,

We can't be always in canonicals,
 Nor always sermonising.

BALLAD-SINGER. True, for you.
 Now, make a ring, good people. Let me breathe.

[Sings.

Oh ! the wee green neuk, the sly green neuk,
 The wee sly neuk, for me !
 Whare the wheat is wavin' bright and brown,
 And the wind is fresh and free.
 Whare I weave wild weeds, and out o' reeds
 Kerve whistles as I lay ;
 And a douce low voice is murmurin' by,
 Through the lee-lang simmer day.
 Oh ! the wee green neuk, &c.

And where a' things luik as though they lo'ed
 To languish in the sun ;
 And that if they feed the fire they dree,
 They wadna ae pang were gone.
 Whare the lift aboon is still as death,
 And bright as life can be ;
 While the douce low voice says, na, na, na !
 But ye mauna luik sae at me.
 Oh ! the wee green neuk, &c.

Whare the lang rank bent is soft and cule,
 And freshenin' till the feet ;
 And the spot is sly, and the spinnie high,
 Whare my love and I mak' seat :
 And I teaze her till she rins, and then,
 I catch her roun' the tree ;
 While the poppies shak' their heids and blush :
 Let them blush till they drap, for me !
 Oh ! the wee green neuk, &c.

FESTUS. And all who know such feelings and such scenes
Will, I am sure, reward you. Here—take this.

OTHERS. And this, and this—too !

SINGER. Thank ye all, good friends !

FESTUS. There's much that hath no merit but its truth,
And no excuse but nature. Nature does
Never wrong : it is society which sins.
Look at the bee upon the wing among flowers ;
How brave, how bright his life. Then mark him hived,
Cramped, cringing in his self-built social cell.
Thus is it in the world-hive : most where men
Lie deep in cities as in drifts, death drifts ;
Nosing each other like a flock of sheep ;
Not knowing and not caring whence nor whither
They come or go, so that they fool together.

LUCIFER. It is quite fair to halve these lives, and say
This life is nature's, that society's,
When both are side-views only of one thing.

FARMER. Here comes his reverence. Sir, it does one good
To see you come among us, in these days.

PARSON. Why, I have but little comfort in these pastimes ;
And any heart, turned Godwards, feels more joy
In one short hour of prayer, than e'er was raised
By all the feasts on earth, since their foundation.
But no one will believe us ; as if we
Had never known the vain things of the world !
Nor lain and slept in sin's seducing shade,
Listless, until God woke us ; made us feel
We should be up and stirring in the sun ;
For everything had to be done ere night !
What is all this joy and jollity about ?
Grant there may be no sin. What good is it ?

FARMER. I can't defend these feasts, sir, and can't blame.

PARSON. Good evening, friends ! Why, Festus ! I rejoice
We meet again. I have a young friend here,
A student—who hath stayed with us of late.
You would be glad I know to know each other ;
Therefore be known so.

FESTUS. You are a student, sir.

STUDENT. I profess little. But it is a title
A man may claim perhaps with modesty.

FESTUS. True. All mankind are students. How to live
And how to die forms the great lesson still.
I know what study is : it is to toil
Hard, through the hours of the sad midnight watch,
At tasks which seem a systematic curse,
And course of bootless penance. Night by night,
To trace one's thought as if on iron leaves ;
And sorrowful as though it were the mode
And date of death we wrote on our own tombs :
Wring a slight sleep out of the couch, and see
The self-same moon which lit us to our rest,

Her place scarce changed perceptibly in heaven,
 Now light us to renewal of our toils.
 This, to the young mind, wild and all in leaf,
 Which knowledge, grafting, paineth. Fruit soon comes ;
 And more than all our troubles pays us powers ;
 So that we joy to have endured so much :
 Slaved, slain ourselves, almost. More ; it is to strive
 To bring the mind up to one's own esteem :
 Who but the generous fail ? It is to think,
 While thought is standing thick upon the brain,
 As dew upon the brow—for thought is brain-sweat—
 And gathering quick and dark, like storms in summer,
 Until convulsed, condensed, in lightning sport,
 It plays upon the heavens of the mind ;
 Opens the hemisphered abysses here,
 And we become revealers to ourselves.

STUDENT. When night hath set her silver lamp on high,
 Then is the time for study : when heaven's light
 Pours itself on the page, like prophesy
 On time, unglooming all its mighty meanings ;
 It is then we feel the sweet strength of the stars,
 And magic of the moon.

LUCIFER. It's a bad habit.

STUDENT. And wisdom dwells in secret, and on high,
 As do the stars. The sun's diurnal glare
 Is for the worldly herd ; but for the wise,
 The cold pure radiance of the night-born light,
 Wherewith is inspiration of the truth.
 Time was, I ne'er sought rest before the sun
 Rose broad ; and, maybe, for that sacrifice,
 Through a like length of time as that now gone,
 The world shall speak of me six thousand years hence

LUCIFER. How know you that the world won't end to-morrow ?

PARSON. I, now, an early riser, love to hail
 The dreamy struggles of the stars with light,
 And the recovering breath of earth, sleep drowned,
 Awakening to the wisdom of the sun,
 And life of light within the tent of heaven ;
 To kiss the feet of Morning as she walks
 In dewy light along the hills, while they,
 All-odorous as an angel's fresh-culled crown,
 Unveil to her their bounteous loveliness.

STUDENT. I am devote to study. Worthy books
 Are not companions ; they are solitudes ;
 We lose ourselves in them and all our cares.
 The further back we search the human mind,
 Mean in the mass, but in the instance great ;
 Which starting first with deities, and stars,
 And broods of beings earth-born, heaven-begot,
 And all the bright side of the broad world, now
 Doats upon dreams and dim atomic truths ;
 Is all for comfort and no more for glory ;

The nobler and more marvellous it shows.
 Trifles like these make up the present time ;
 The Iliad and the Pyramids the past.

FESTUS. The future will have glory not the less.
 I can conceive a time when the world shall be
 Much better visibly, and when, as far
 As social life and its relations tend,
 Men, morals, manners shall be lifted up
 To a pure height we know not of nor dream ;
 When all men's rights and duties shall be clear,
 And charitably exercised and borne ;
 When education, conscience, and good deeds
 Shall have just equal sway, and civil claims ;
 Great crimes shall be cast out, as were of old
 Devils possessing madmen ; truth shall reign,
 Nature shall be rethroned, and man sublimed.

STUDENT. Oh ! then may heaven come down again to earth ;
 And dwell with her, as once, like to a friend.

LUCIFER. As like each other as a sword and scythe.
 Oh ! then shall lions mew and lambskins roar.

FESTUS. And having studied—what next ?

STUDENT. Much I long
 To view the capital city of the world.
 The mountains, the great cities, and the sea,
 Are each an era in the life of youth.

FESTUS. There to get worldly ways, and thoughts, and schemes ;
 To learn to detect, distrust, despise mankind ;
 To ken a false factitious glare amid much
 That shines with seeming saintlike purity ;
 To gloss misdeeds ; to trifle with great truths ;
 To pit the brain against the heart, and plead
 Wit before wisdom ; these are the world's ways :
 It learns us to lose that in crowds, which we
 Must after seek alone, our innocence ;
 And when the crowd is gone.

STUDENT. Not only that :
 There, all great things are round one. Interests
 Mighty and mountainous even of estimate,
 Are daily heaped or scattered 'neath the eye.
 Great deeds, great thoughts, great schemes, world-bettering, all
 In practice possible, or in purpose great,
 Of human nature, there, are common things.
 Men make themselves be deathless as in spite ;
 As if they waged some lineal feud with time ;
 As though their fathers were immortal, too ;
 And immortality an every-day
 Accomplishment.

FESTUS. Fie ! fie ! it is more for this :
 Amid gayer people, and more wanton ways,
 To give a loose to all the lists of youth ;
 To train your passion flowers high ahead,
 And bind them on your brow as others do.

The mornlit revel and the shameless mate ;
 The tabled hues of darkness and of blood ;
 The published bosom and the crowning smile ;
 The cup excessive ; and if aught there be
 More vain than these or wanton,—that to have—
 Have all but always in intent, effect,
 Or fact. Nay, nay, deny it not : I know.
 Youth hath a strange and strong desire to try
 All feelings on the heart : it is very wrong,
 And dangerous, and deadly : strive against it !

STUDENT. It might be some old sage was warning us.

FESTUS. Youth might be wise. We suffer less from pains
 Than pleasures.

STUDENT. I should like to see the world,
 And gain that knowledge which is—

FESTUS. Barrener
 Than ice ; possessing and producing nought
 But means and forms of death or vanity.
 The world is just as hallow as an eggshell.
 It is a surface, not a solid, mind :
 And all this boasted knowledge of the world
 Means but acquaintance with low things, it seems
 To me, things evil, or things indifferent.

FARMER. Much more is said of knowledge than its worth.
 A man may gain all knowledge here, and yet
 Be, after death, as much in the dark as I.

LUCIFER. What makes you know of living after death ?

FARMER. Why, nothing that I know, and there it is !—
 But something I am told has told me so.

No angel ever came to me to prove it ;
 And all my friends have died and left no ghosts.

FESTUS. All that is good a man may learn from himself ;
 And much, too, that is bad.

PARSON. Nay, let me speak !
 Aught that is good the soul receives of God,
 When he hath made it his ; and until then,
 Man cannot know, nor do, nor be, aught good.
 Oh ! there is nought on earth worth being known
 But God and our own souls—the God we have
 Within our hearts ; for it is not the hope,
 Nor faith, nor fear, nor notions others have
 Of God can serve us, but the sense and soul
 We have of him within us ; and, for men,
 God loves us men each individually,
 And deals with us in order, soul by soul.

LUCIFER. But this is not the place for sermons.

PARSON.

True

We heard once, Festus, you were travelling :
 Pray, in what parts ?

FESTUS. Among the outer orbs.

PARSON. Nay, surely not so far ; except in thought,
 Perchance, or calculation.

FESTUS. A month back
I was in giant land.

PARSON. Ah ! fee-faw-fum ?—
They did not eat you, there ?

FESTUS. Oh ! no. They much
Preferred their usual fare.

PARSON. What might it be ?
Not Englishmen and hasty pudding, eh ?

FESTUS. They are no more cannibals than you or I ;
But are of various tastes, and patronize,
I know, rich diet.

PARSON. It's excusable.
And they are great consumers, I dare say.

FESTUS. A wheat-stack of our friend's here would but make
One loaf of bread for them. Oak trees they use
As pickles, and tall pines as toothpicks ; whales,
In their own blubber fried, serve as mere fish
To bait their appetites. Boiled elephants,
Rhinoceroses, and roasted crocodiles—
Every thing dished up whole—with lions stewed,
Shark sauce, and eagle pie, and young giraffes,
Make up a potluck dinner,—if there's plenty.
Then as for game, the pterodactyles
And ichthyosauri are great dainties there,
Coming in season only once an age.
They reckon there by ages, not by years.

STUDENT. And as to beverage ?

FESTUS. Oh ; if thirsty, they
Will lay them down and drink a river dry,
Nor once draw breath.

PARSON. Ah ! camel, gnat, and all.

FESTUS. Others are more abstemious, and consume
Egg-broth and simples chiefly. There was one
Who when I saw him first sat by a fire :
An egg, an hour-glass, and a water bowl
Being before him. All he said was this :—

When the sand is run
The egg is done.

This he first boiled, then roasted, and then ate.

STUDENT. What sort of one ? Perhaps an ostrich egg ?

FESTUS. Much larger. Here is nothing of the kind.
The yolk was like the sun seen in a fog ;
The white was thin and clouded, and the shell,
Heavy and hard, as is our earth-pie crust.

LUCIFER. What kind of bird it was that laid it—guess !

PARSON. Continue. You have travelled in the dark ;
But wisdom sometimes inns with ignorance.
What of their persons, habits, language, creed ?

FESTUS. Huger than Napheleim of old, whose bulk
Cast cloudlike shadows on the eclipsed earth ;
Huger than those our childhood's chap-books brand ;
Or all whose deeds till now defile romance ;

Albadan, and those monstrous, sire and son,
 Whom Amadis, the flower of knights, o'erthrew,
 Not counting much of giants—so to win
 His Oriana bright at Mirafior ;
 In form and stature, these, as mountain-sized,
 Could walk through woods like ours as through long grass,
 They live seven thousand years of years like man's,
 And then die suddenly ; when death takes place
 They burn the bodies always in a lake,
 The spray whereof is ashes, and its depths
 Unfathomable fire ; and never mourn ;
 Use little verbal language, but express
 All thought by action, and oracular use
 Of eye or hand. Their chief religion seems
 Self punishment by sin and rites of fire.
 'Twould do the godless good to visit once,
 One of this awful race whom late I saw ;
 And who, were time and place more fitting—

STUDENT.

Nay,

We are apart from others. Nothing save
 Yon heavenly ark which floats among the stars,
 Now resting on an Ararat of clouds,
 Hath leave to overlook us.

PARSON.

Pray proceed.

FESTUS. Once I had travelled through a weary world,
 Than all in heaven more barren and forlorn ;
 Dark as the wild heart of a thunder-cloud ;
 Strewn with the wrecks and ashes of all orbs,
 Firestranded, rolling in quick agony ;
 Peopled with burning ghosts dislimbed and charred ;
 And in the midst a giant, by a fire,
 Kindled of burning passions, and full fed
 With sins long seasoned ; at whose feet there stood
 A crystal cistern, brimmed with human tears,
 Which sprinkled but inflamed the fire withal ;
 The giant all while watching with stern mien,
 And ruthless interest the whole. Dread sir !
 Said I, as I drew near, what angers thee ?
 He answered not, but pointed ; and I saw,
 Full in the midst of that infernal fire,
 Blazing aghast in solar solitude,
 A panting shadow, which, with skeleton eyes,
 And woe-gouged countenance, whereon was hung
 A white eclipse, like darkness pale with pain,—
 Watched for the disappearance of the heavens
 With a despairing hope : entranced it lay
 In palpitant torments self-perpetuate, racked
 Ever ; anon turned restlessly, and cried
 Woe, woe is me ! Eternal Spirit God !
 Thy wrath is heaviest when made bearable.
 Put forth thy strength and sweep the universe,
 With me, into the night of nothingness,

That sin and soul may perish. Woe is me !
 Still shine the blessed heavens, and still, like ice
 By art fire-frozen, my dole my dole renews.
 And the giant laughed, glad in his ministry
 Of scathe ; and blew, with all his breath, his hell,
 Still fiercer—till it bellowed, and the orb
 Beneath my foot sole seared, and I took leave ;
 For there was somewhat in the giant's air,
 And his huge balefire, and the naked plain—
 Bald as the scalp of Time—which caused me dread.

PARSON. I doubt not all you say is memory's birth,
 Conceived of fiction. Never mortal man
 Hath travelled in another sphere than this.
 It was a vision, Festus, say, a dream.

FESTUS. Say as you will, is not a dream a fact ?

PARSON. Dreams you have dreamed till you believe in them ;
 But such as these are awesome. Not the less
 View them vouchsafed as warnings. Oft the mind,
 Freed by angelic sleep from bodily bonds,
 Knows scenes and themes like these you have named, which tend
 To edifying much. Such travel is
 Like mine, the travail simply of the brain.

FESTUS. It is pure reality.

PARSON. Well, say no more.

We may pursue the sense of things too far.
 True travellers they through all the lands of life,
 Moral, emotional, or love's sunny zone ;
 The palm-graced pilgrims of truth's holy land,
 Who, all experienced, reason, wisdom find,
 And virtue less without than in themselves.
 So through all moral schools, the cold, stern porch,
 Divine, impassive ; garden gay, where still
 Dwelled pleasure scarce than virtue less severe
 And stately grove of lofty lore select ;
 The truth sought soul progresses, till we find
 Our home is where she leads ; and we are guests
 But of our guide ; the shrine she shows, herself.
 The golden side of heaven's great shield is faith ;
 The silver, reason. You see this, I that ;
 The junction is invisible to both.

STUDENT. One thing is sometimes said, another meant.

LUCIFER. What are your politics ?

FARMER. I have none.

LUCIFER. Good.

FARMER. I have my thoughts. I am no party man.
 I care for measures more than men, but think
 Some little may depend upon the men ;
 Something in fires depends upon the grate.

FIRST BOY. What are your colours ?

SECOND. Blue as heaven.

THIRD. And mine

Are yellow as the sun,

FIRST. Mine, green as grass.

SECOND. Green's forsaken, and yellow's forsworn ;
And blue's the colour that shall be worn.

STUDENT. As to religion, politics, law, and war,
But little need be said. All are required,
And all are well enough. Of liberty,
And slavery, and tyranny we hear
Much ; but the human mind affects extremes.
The heart is in the middle of the system ;
And all affections gather round the truth,
The moderated joys and woes of life.
I love my God, my country, kind and kin ;
Nor would I see a dog wronged of his bone.
My country ! if a wretch should e'er arise,
Out of thy countless sons, who would curtail
Thy freedom, dim thy glory,—while he lives
May all earth's peoples curse him—for of all
Hast thou secured the blessing ; and if one
Exist who would not arm for liberty,
Be he, too, cursèd living : and when dead,
Let him be buried downwards, with his face
Looking to hell ; and o'er his coward grave
The hare skulk, in her form.

LUCIFER. Nay, gently, friend.
Curse nothing, not the Devil. He's beside you—
For aught you know.

STUDENT. I neither know nor care.

(They pass some card-players.)

FESTUS. Kings, queens, knaves, tens, would trick the world away,
And it were not now and then for some brave ace.

STUDENT. You see yon wretched starved old man ; his brow
Grooved out with wrinkles like the brown dry sand
The tide of life is leaving ?

LUCIFER. Yes, I see him.

STUDENT. Last week he thought he was about to die :
So he bade gold be strewn beneath his pillow,
Gold on a chest that he might lie and see,
And gold put in a basin on his bed,
That he might dabble with his fingers in.
He's going now to grope for pence or pins.
He never gave a pin's worth in his life.
What would you do to him ?

LUCIFER. I would have him wrought
Into a living wire, which beaten out,
Might make a golden network for the world ;
Then melt him inch by inch, and hell by hell,
Where is the law of wrath.

STUDENT. Oh, charity !
It is a thought the Devil might be proud of—
Once and away. Misers and spendthrifts may
Torment each other in the world to come.

LUCIFER. And thus do men apportion their own lot ;

A grain of comfort and a sack of sin.

FESTUS. Men look on death as lightning, always far
Off, or in heaven. They know not it is in
Themselves, a strong and inward tendency,
The soul of every atom, every hair :
That nature's infinite electric life,
Escaping from each isolated frame,
Up out of earth, or down from heaven, becomes
To each its proper death, and adds itself
Thus to the great reunion of the whole.
There is a man in mourning ! What does he here ?

STUDENT. He has just buried the only friend he had,
And now comes hither to enjoy himself.

FESTUS. Why will we dedicate the dead to God,
And not ourselves the living ? Oft we speak,
With tears of joy and trust, of some dear friend
As surely up in heaven ; while that same soul,
For aught we know, may be shuddering even in hell
To hear his name named ; or a wandering ghost,
Moon-eyed, which gasps to read on marble slab
His virtue-lauding epitaph ; or there may be
No soul i' the case, and the fat icy worm,
Give him a tongue, can tell us all about him.

STUDENT. Here is music. Stay. That simple melody
Comes on the heart like infant innocence,
Pure feeling pure ; while yet the new-bodied soul
Is swinging to the motion of the heavens,
And scarce hath caught, as yet, earth's backening course.

FESTUS. The heart is formed as earth was—its first age
Formless and void, and fit but for itself ;
Then feelings half alive, just organized,
Come next,—then creeping sports and purposes ;
Then animal desires, delights, and loves—
For love is the first and granite-like effect
Of things—the longest and the highest : next
The wild and winged desires, youth's saurian schemes,
Which creep and fly by turns ; which kill and eat,
And do disgorge each other ; comes at length
Humanity to perfect life, and divide,
By woman. Great their bliss, but ill arrives.
Or the insipidity of an innocent soul
Palls : or some fatal act, a curse, a death,
An exile's laid upon it, and it goes—
Quits its green Eden for the sandy world,
Where it works out its nature, as it may ;
In sweat, smiles, blood, tears, cursings, and what not.
And giant sins possess it ; and it worships
Works of the hand, head, heart—its own or others—
A creature worship, which excludeth God's :
The less thrusts out the greater. Warning comes,
But the heart fears not—feels not ; till at last
Down comes the flood from heaven ; and that heart,

Broken inwards, earthlike, to its central hell :
 Or like the bright and burning eye we see
 Inly, when pressed hard backwards on the brain,
 Ends and begins again—destroyed, is saved.
 Every man is the first man to himself,
 And Eves are just as plentiful as apples ;
 Nor do we fall, nor are we saved, by proxy.
 The Eden we live in is our own heart ;
 And the first thing we do, of our free choice,
 Is sure and necessary to be sin.
 Each to himself is also the last man,
 And with him bears and earns the world's vast doom.

LUCIFER. The only right men have is to be damned.
 What is the good of music, or the beauty ?
 Music tells no truths.

FESTUS. True ; but it suggests
 And illustrates the highest of all truths,
 The harmony of all things—even of earth,
 With its great Author. Oh ! there is nought so sweet
 As lying and listening music from the hands,
 And singing from the lips, of one we love ;
 Lips that all others should be tuned to. Then
 The world would all be love and song ; heaven's harps
 And orbs join in ; the whole be harmony ;
 Distinct, yet blended—blending all in one
 Long and delicious tremble like a chord.
 But to thee, God ! all being is a harp
 Whereon thou makest mightiest melody.

LUCIFER. Hast ever been in love, friend ?

STUDENT.

Never, I

FESTUS. Spite of morality or of mystery, love
 It is, which mostly destines our life.
 What makes the world in after life I know not ;
 For our horizon alters as we age :
 Power only can make up for the lack of love ;
 Power of some sort. The mind at one time grows
 So fast, it fails ; and then its stretch is more
 Than its strength ; but, as it opes, love fills it up,
 Like to the stamen in the flower of life,
 Till for the time we well-nigh grow all love ;
 And soon we feel the want of one kind heart
 To love what's well, and to forgive what's ill,
 In us,—that heart we play for at all risks.

STUDENT. How can the heart, which lies embodied deep,
 In blood and bone, set like a ruby eye
 Into the breast, be made a toy for beauty,
 And, vane-like, blown about by every wanton sigh ?
 How can the soul, the rich star-travelled stranger,
 Who here sojourneth only for a purchase,
 Risk all the riches of his years of toil,
 And his God-vouched inheritance of heaven,
 For one light taste of love ? which makes forget

By force of juice Lethean all beside
Of lore, or studious gain, or so I have heard ;
Love being itself most perishable of things,
A vanishing quantity, at the best.

LUCIFER. No matter !
It is so ; and when once you know the sport,
The crowded pack of passions in full cry,
The sweet deceits, the tempting obstacles,
The smile, the sigh, the tear, and the embrace,
With kisses close as stars in the Milky Way,
In at the death, you cry, though 'twere your own ;
Or, so I have heard.

STUDENT. Most sound morality !
Nothing is thought of virtue, then, nor judgment ?

LUCIFER. Oh ! everything is thought of—but not then.
And—judgment—no ! it is nowhere in the field.

STUDENT. Slow-paced and late arriving, still it comes.
I cannot understand this love ; I hear
Of its idolatry, more than its respect.

FESTUS. Respect is what we owe ; love what we give.
And men would mostly rather give than pay.
Meanwhile let no vain teachings lead aside :
Morality's the sole right rule for all.
Nor could society cohere without
Virtue were loved ; there are whose spirits walk
Abreast of angels and the future, here.
Respect and love thou such.

LUCIFER. Of course you wish
Women to love you rather than love them.
Well, mind ! it is folly to tell women truth !
They would rather live on lies so they be sweet.
Never be long in one mind to one love.
You change your practice with your subject. All
Differ. But yet, who knows one woman well
By heart, knows all. It is my experience ;
And I advise on good authority.

FESTUS. Time laughs at love. It is a hateful sight,
That bald old grey-beard jeering the boy, Love.
Passion is from affection ; and there is nought
So maddening and so lowering as to have
The worse in passion. Think, when one by one,
Pride, love, and jealousy, and fifty more
Great feelings column up to force a heart,
And all are beaten back,—all fail—all fall :
The tower intact ; but risk it : we must learn.
To know the world, be wise and be a fool.
The heart will have its swing—the world its way :
Who seeks to stop them, only throws himself down.
We must take as we find : go as they go,
Or stand aside. Let the world have the wall.
How do you think, pray, to get through the world ?

STUDENT. I mean not to get through the world at all

But over it.

FESTUS. Aspiring ! you will find
The world is all up-hill when we would do ;
All down-hill when we suffer. Nay, it will part
Like the Red Sea, so that the poor may pass.
We make our compliments to wretchedness,
And hope the poor want nothing, and are well.
But I mean, what profession will you choose ?
Surely you will do something for a name.

STUDENT. Names are of much more consequence than things.

FESTUS. Well ; here's our honest, all-exhorting friend,
The parson—here the doctor. I am sure
The Devil might act as moderator there,
And do mankind some service.

LUCIFER. In his way.

STUDENT. But I care neither for men's souls nor bodies.

FESTUS. What say you to the law ? Are you ambitious ?

STUDENT. Nor do I mind for other people's business.

I have no heart for their predicaments :

I am for myself. I measure everything

By, what is it to me ? from which I find

I have but little in common with the mass,

Except my meals and so forth ; dress and sleep.

I have that within me I can live upon :

Spider-like, spin my place out anywhere.

LUCIFER. This youth I have long observed as one most apt

By virtue of like studies to thine own ;

(And to meet two such wizards in one night

Seems a delight scarce credible,) to form

A future friend. Not had it been so planned

By subtlest wit, could our rencounter here

More fortunate be, more opportune.

FESTUS.

Agreed.

I think I see in him a want supplied

Of life doomed lonely enough. Nor seems he lured

By traits of popular art or mercenary :

But more through intellectual penance given

To obsolescent quests than feastful crafts.

To none of all the sciences, nor arts,

Astral, or earthy, you feel your mind, then, drawn !

STUDENT. Why no ; there are so many rise and fall and fall,
One knows not which to choose.

FESTUS.

True ; for as for the stars,

I never look on them without dismay.

Earth hath outrun them in our modern mind

By worlds of odds. We have lost all sympathies

With the e'er moving skies, and seem, ourselves,

To the eternal less, and less concerned

In act and use of heavenly things, than when

Poor earth was almost all. Enough for us

It seems, and our cold reckoners to jot down

Their revolutions, distances, and squares ;

While the bright laws which stars and spirits rule,
 From deep-toned Saturn ; from the sea-god's star,
 And thunderous bass of heaven's immediate orb,
 Whose inefficient ray, or good or ill
 Fails to decide here, to the shrill-voiced moon,
 Are buried, grave on grave. Who now will care
 To learn of things more spiritual than facts
 Totalled up, day by day ? Who now aspires,
 Aweful, to attain the spells of secret power,
 And safety, say, 'gainst spirits supernal, taught
 By ancient seers and sages ? Who now knows
 Of fourfold worlds and elemental spheres
 Concentric, like the ring the wizard draws
 Round him, which lord our earth ; yet in such wise
 That still, through them, we may conjoin our souls
 To the starry guardians of all worlds, beyond
 Moon-mansions, and heaven's burning heart, where dwell
 Celestial spirits all-knowing, and divine
 Demons ? All, infinitely unsought, are deemed
 Doubtless, extinct. No danger now of aught
 Knowing, which ought not justly to be known.
 And you, ye planetary sons of light,
 Your aspects, dignities, gifts, and detriments,
 And all your heavenly houses and effects,
 Unknown to shallow sciolists, shall no more
 Meet here, devout expounders. Ye shall shine
 Henceforth, in vain, to man ; cease to reward,
 Or instigate ; and you, too, ye juried signs,
 Earth's sun-surrounding path illuming, mind
 Move ye no more ; nought more of faith feel men
 In the eternal order, God was deemed
 To have made common once 'tween heaven and earth ;
 But all the starry inclusions of all signs
 Shall rise, and rule and pass, and no one know
 There are worlds whose spirit-rulers fraternize
 With ours ; and unsuspect, high commune hold,
 In the shining voices of the spheres, with souls
 Of astral purity. The mystic charm
 In numbers, and the all-various unity
 Of being, repetitive, which ones with God
 The whole, and coming from, to him returns,
 Allures no more man's mind, debased ; nor, now,
 The mysteries of names ; yet wot we well
 That natural perfection multiplied
 By spiritual, on monadic deity based,
 God's names, as known to men and angels, gives ;
 And how thus Fate rules, really all, by means
 Mediate, and nominal.

STUDENT. Take, too, chemic art ;
 What do men now ? Weigh atoms ; count them ; rate
 Their mean affinities, laws. The starry stone,
 Golden, invisible, principle of life,

Fine quintessence of all the elements,
 Is still unbought ; still flows the stream of pearl
 Beneath the magic mountain ; still the scent
 As of thousand amaranth wreaths, all life which lures,
 Though vainly, unto its sweetness, floats around
 Mistlike, the shining bath where Luna laves,
 Or Sol, bright brother of that moonèd maid,
 Triumphs. The earth celestial, the live land,
 Still is, though veiled ; still breathe for those who will,
 The airs of Paradise. The watery fire,
 Destructive, recreative, impalpable,
 The initial and conclusion of the world,
 The secret of creation shared 'tween God
 And man, now nature's only, timewise, still
 Waits man's deific choice ; soul's simple light
 Divine, wherein all rudiments blend, still burns
 Our spirits within. The snowy gold, the seed
 Nucleate of star,—by wind impregnèd, of God,
 If arbitrary of favour,—bound, being tracked,
 Dismasked, to render rich and deathless all,
 Hides not. The water of deathless life still flows ;
 Still bounds through nature's veins the sanative juice
 Absolvent of disease ; and still, in fine,
 The secrets only to be told by fire,
 Starry, or beamless, central and extreme,
 Burn to be born. And other natures may
 Use them, and do. In Demogorgon's hall
 Still sits the universal mystery, life
 Hidden in itself, but cognizable in cause,
 By its own willing members : of man, sole,
 The recreant spirit of the world ignored.
 He surface-knowledge loves ; the crimes of crowds
 Calls virtue ; adores the useful vices ; licks
 The gory dust from off the feet of war,
 And swears it food for gods, though fit for fiends
 Only ; reversing, in his own vile plight,
 The Devil's, when first he boarded this our orb,
 A fallen angel's form, a reptile's soul.

LUCIFER. Oh ! this is libellous to man and fiend
 And brute together.

STUDENT. All are art and part
 Of the same mystic treason. But enough !
 I have seen the end of all earth's loftier lore.
 There shall be no more cabala, nor magic ;
 Nor Rosicrucian nor alchymic skill ;
 Nor fairy fantasies : no more hobgoblins,
 Nor ghosts, nor imps, nor demons. Conjurors,
 Enchanters, witches, wizards, shall all die
 Hopeless, and heirless ; their divining arts
 Supernal or infernal, dead, with them.
 And so it will doubtless be with other things
 In time ; therefore will I my brain commit

To none of them.

FESTUS. Perchance it were wiser not :
 Man's heart hath not half uttered itself yet,
 And much remains to do as well as say.
 The heart is some time ere it finds its focus.
 And found, with the whole light of nature strained
 To a hair's-breadth through it, oft, the things it burns
 To search, it lights, oblivious, to their death.
 I had not thought the world within its walls
 Held one so versed in ignorance, so expert
 In things impracticable. You must have lived
 So centrally apart as not to know
 That studies once perchance thought loftiest, since,
 Have lost their footing by proved uselessness ;
 While lowlier ones, which merely better man,
 Bring him more near his Maker.

STUDENT. I believe
 The world will neither better end nor worse
 For aught I do, or wish to do, or mean.

LUCIFER. Signs of a conscientious recklessness,
 Such thoughts, as touch me and attract. I never
 So fortunate seem as in 'lighting upon friends
 Bent on their own ends, openly. Good ; be wise.

STUDENT. Wisdom is not to know what others know.
 For ~~prize~~ science patent to mankind
 I reckon nought. Secret truth is that I seek.

LUCIFER. And rightly. Pure intelligence alone,
 Unmixed with moral aims, is truly wise.
 To cheapen truth that every one may buy,
 You must so thin the gold as makes it worthless.

FESTUS. Nay, but contrariwise ; the more you spread
 The more you emulate truth's deity,
 In his best attribute, the gift of bliss
 To others. Truth for its own sake's worth little ;
 Communicated, priceless. Mix with men ;
 Not slavewise to the mass ; but having gained
 In secret freedom, truth, that moral gold
 Which mind transmutes, perfective from all thought,
 And hath in noblest souls most potent rule,
 Impart to all prepared.

STUDENT. This alchemy
 How shall I learn, whereby thought truth becomes,
 And knowledge, wisdom ;—magistery divine ?

LUCIFER. We'll speak of this sometime at leisure. I
 Know one, who could unseal this hidden lore ;
 And hold the wine of wisdom to their lips,
 Who can appreciate her divinest draught.
 Nay, more ; perchance can reconcile the aims
 Of both ; and knowledge supplement with power.

FESTUS. Well, farewell, Mr. Student. May you never
 Regret those hours which make the mind, if they
 Unmake the body ; for the sooner we

Are fit to be all mind, the better. Blessed
 Is he whose heart is the home of the great dead,
 And their great thoughts. Who can mistake great thoughts?
 They seize upon the mind ; arrest and search,
 And shake it ; bow the tall soul as by wind ;
 Rush over it like a river over reeds,
 Which quaver in the current ; turn us cold,
 And pale, and voiceless ; leaving in the brain
 A rocking and a ringing ; glorious,
 But momentary, madness might it last,
 And close the soul with heaven as with a seal !
 In lieu of all these things whose loss thou mournest,
 If earnestly or not I know not, use
 The great and good and true which ever live ;
 And are all common to pure eyes and true.
 Upon the summit of each mountain-thought
 Worship thou God, with heaven uplifted head
 And arms horizon stretched ; for deity is seen
 From every elevation of the soul.
 Study the light ; attempt the high ; seek out
 The soul's bright path ; and since the soul is fire,
 Of heat intelligential, turn it aye
 To the all-Fatherly source of light and life :
 Piety purifies the soul to see
 Visions, perpetually, of grace and power,
 Which, to their sight who in ignorant sin abide,
 Are now as e'er incognizable. Obey
 Thy genius, for a minister it is
 Unto the throne of Fate. Draw towards thy soul,
 And centralize, the rays which are around
 Of the divinity. Keep thy spirit pure
 From worldly taint, by the repellant strength
 Of virtue. Think on noble thoughts and deeds,
 Ever. Count o'er the rosary of truth ;
 And practise precepts which are proven wise.
 It matters not then what thou fearest. Walk
 Boldly and wisely in that light thou hast ;—
 There is a hand above will help thee on.
 I am an omnist, and believe in all
 Religions ; fragments of one golden world
 To be relit yet, and take its place in heaven,
 Where is the whole, sole truth, in deity.
 Meanwhile, his word, his law, writ soulwise here,
 Study ; its truths love ; practise its behests,
 They will be with thee when all else have gone.
 Mind, body, passion all wear out ; not faith
 Nor truth. Keep thy heart cool, or rule its heat
 To fixed ends ; waste it not upon itself.
 Not all the agony maybe of the damned
 Fused in one pang, vies with that earthquake throb
 Which wakens soul from life-waste, to let see
 The world rolled by for aye, and we must wait

For our next chance the nigh eternity ;
Whether it be in heaven or elsewhere.

STUDENT.

Sir,

I will remember this most grave advice
And think of you with all respect.

FESTUS.

Well, mind,

The worst of men may give the best advice.
Our deeds sometimes are better than our thoughts.
Commend me, friend, to everyone you meet.
I am an universal favourite.
All turn to me whenever I speak, full-faced,
As planets to the sun, or owls to a rushlight.
Farewell.

STUDENT. I hope to meet again.

FESTUS.

And I.

LUCIFER. Fear not. Chance favours like recurrences.

FESTUS. Yonder's a woman singing. Let us hear her.

SINGER.

In the grey church tower
Were the clear bells ringing,
When a maiden sat in her lonely bower
Sadly and lowly singing ;
And thus she sang, that maiden fair
Of the soft blue eyes and the long light hair.

This hand hath oft been held by one

Who now is far away ;
And here I sit and sigh alone
Through all the weary day :
Oh when will he I love return ?
And when shall I forget to mourn ?

Along the dark and dizzy path
Ambition madly runs,
'Tis there they say his course he hath,
And therefore love he shuns ;
Oh fame and honour crown his brow,
For so he would be with me now.

In the grey church tower
Kept the clear bells ringing,
When a bounding step in that lonely bower
Broke on the maiden singing ;
She turned, she saw ; oh happy fair !
For her love who loved her so well was there.

LUCIFER. And we might trust these youths and maidens fair,
The world was made for nothing but love, love.
Now I think it was made most to be burned.

FESTUS. The night is glooming on us. It is the hour
When lovers will speak lowly, for the sake
Of being nigh each other ; and when love
Shoots up the eye, like morning on the east,
Making amends for the long northern night
They passed, ere either knew the other loved ;
The hour of hearts ! Say grey-beards what they please,
The heart of age is like an emptied wine-cup ;
Its life lies in a heel-tap : how can age judge ?

'Twere a waste of time to ask how they wasted theirs ;
 But while the blood is bright, breath sweet, skin smooth,
 And limbs all made to minister delight ;
 Ere yet we have shed our locks, like trees their leaves,
 And we stand staring bare into the air ;
 He is a fool who is not for love and beauty.
 It is I, the young, to the young speak. I am of them ;
 And always shall be. What are years to me ?
 You traitor years, that fang the hands ye have licked,
 Vicelike ; henceforth your venom-sacs are gone.
 I have conquered. Ye shall perish : yea, shall fall
 Like birdlets beaten by some resistless storm
 'Gainst a dead wall, dead. I pity ye, that such
 Mean things should have raised, in man, or hope or fear ;
 Those Titans of the heart that fight at heaven,
 And sleep, by fits, on fire, whose slightest stir's
 An earthquake. I am bound and blessed to youth.
 None but the brave and beautiful can love.
 Oh give me to the young, the fair, the free,
 The brave, who would breast a rushing, burning world
 Which came between him and his heart's delight.
 Mad must I be, and what's the world ? Like mad
 For itself. And I to myself am all things, too.
 If my heart thundered would the world rock ? Well
 Then let the mad world fight its shadow down.
 Soon there may be nor sun, nor world, nor shadow.
 But thou, my blood, my bright red running soul,
 Rejoice thou, like a river in thy rapids.
 Rejoice, thou wilt never pale with age, nor thin ;
 But in thy full dark beauty, vein by vein
 Serpent-wise, me encircling, shalt, to the end,
 Throb, bubble, sparkle, laugh, and leap along.
 Make merry, heart, while the holidays shall last.
 Better than daily dwine, break sharp with life ;
 Like a stag, sunstruck, top thy bounds, and die.
 Heart, I could tear thee out, thou fool, thou fool ;
 And strip thee into shreds upon the wind.
 What have I done that thou shouldst maze me thus ?

LUCIFER. Let us away ; we have had enough of hearts.

FESTUS. Oh for the young heart like a fountain playing
 Flinging its bright fresh feelings up to the skies
 It loves and strives to reach ; strives, loves in vain.
 It is of earth, and never meant for heaven,
 Let us love both and die. The sphinx-like heart
 Loathes life the moment that life's riddle is read.
 The knot of our existence solved, all things
 Loose-ended lie, and useless. Life is had,
 And lo ! we sigh, and say, can this be all ?
 It is not what we thought ; it is very well,
 But we want something more. There is but death.
 And when we have said and seen, done, had, enjoyed
 And suffered, maybe, all we have wished, or feared,

From fame to ruin, and from love to loathing,
 There can come but one more change—try it—death.
 Oh it is great to feel that nought of earth,
 Hope, love, nor dread, nor care for what's to come,
 Can check the royal lavishment of life ;
 But, like a streamer strown upon the wind,
 We fling ourselves to fate and to the future.
 For to die young is youth's divinest gift ;
 To pass from one world fresh into another,
 Ere change hath lost the charm of soft regret ;
 And feel the immortal impulse from within
 Which makes the coming, life, cry alway, on !
 And follow it while strong, is heaven's last mercy.
 There is a fire-fly in the south, but shines
 When on the wing. So is't with mind. When once
 We rest, we darken. On ! saith God to the soul,
 As unto the earth for ever. On it goes,
 A rejoicing native of the infinite,
 As is a bird, of air ; an orb, of heaven.

XII.

That æry lodestone, operant still,
 The love of boundless knowledge, leads us down
 Deeper than ever leading went, to search
 The central rayless light we have within,
 And learn, that, touched albeit all mysteries, traced
 Orb-founding theories sagest, handled fire
 Deftliest, unfit, as discontent, to abide
 Longwhile by nature's hearth, 'twere better seek
 Our proper good in act. Such light to love,
 To hope for, strive for, live for, as best shows
 Our Maker, fellow labourer for man's good,
 Working, within us charitably ; and shows,
 To souls, high aimed, who others claim to serve
 Supremely, they themselves need, lowliest rule,
 Life makes most blessed. Even science finds in God
 Its ultimate form, the unknown ; all utmost truth
 To inmost faith, responds ; all heavens externe,
 Arched, sphere o'er sphere conformably, to soul's
 Interior lines. It is from research like this,
 True aspiration riseth.

Earth—The Centre.

LUCIFER and FESTUS.

LUCIFER. Behold us in the fire-crypts of the world ;
 Through seas and buried mountains, tomb-like tracts
 Fit to receive Death's skeleton when he is dead ;
 Through earthquakes and the once proud structured bones
 Of earthquake-swallowed cities, have we wormed,
 Down to fire's ever-burning forge, whence breathes
 That fluent life-heat, penetrative, which clothes

Itself in lightnings, scaping hence through air,
 And pierces to the last and loftiest pore
 Of earth's snow-mantled mountains. In these vaults
 Are hidden the archives of the universe.
 There screened, in awful and omnipotent ease,
 Nature, the delegate of God, brings forth
 Her everlasting elements ; and here,
 The reverend ashes of all ages gone
 See, finally inurned.

FESTUS. All solid now
 Was fluid once, air, water, fire, or some
 Vast, permeant, element ; communal, all in one ;
 As in this focal, world-evolving heat ;
 Moisture all mothering ; or the vacuous power
 We are based on, I must deem.

LUCIFER. The original
 Of all things, all existence being one
 Derivative whole, is one. The differences
 Seen, show diverse but to the finite mind.

FESTUS. This marble-walled immensity, overroofed
 With pendant mountains glittering, awes my soul.

LUCIFER. Here mayst thou lay thine hand on nature's heart,
 And feel its thousand yearèd throbbings beat,
 As through a sea-strait, till to beat, it cease.
 High overhead, and deep below our feet,
 The sea's broad thunder booms, scarce heard ; bowed round,
 Yon arches, like to suspended continents
 Of starry matter burning inwardly, stand :
 Hard by, earth's gleaming axle sleeps, unmoved,
 All movement centering.

FESTUS. Age, here, on age
 Lie heaped like withered leaves. And must it end ?

LUCIFER. All here hath holden fellowship with gods,
 With eldest time and primal matter, space,
 Stars, air, and all inherent fire, the abyss
 Unluminous, chaos, night. These rocks retain
 Proof of those times, earth's ancient youth, when she
 With heaven had holy bridals ; royal gods,
 If turbulent, combative, discontent, nathless
 Their bright, immortal issue ; when, too, lived,
 Prehuman and heroic, the broad-eyed race,
 Whose science, as these rocks the seas sustain,
 Hath formed the base of the world's fluctuous lore ;
 When, too, by mountainous travail, human thought
 Sought to obtain the untouched heavens, by right
 Of lineal virtue ; when the artful powers,
 Forecounsel and experience, by meet aid
 Of wisdom, teachers of all social good,
 With godhead strove ; and gloriously they failed ;
 In failure half successful ; when even men's
 Minds were as continents vast, and not, as now,
 Seed-plots minute, with acres, here and there,

Of brains untitled.

FESTUS. Minds still which know by proof
 What those could but assume, that all these rocks,
 Hand-wrought of One, these solid fires ; the air
 Nebulous, commixed with starry spore, and earth's
 Waters, with unborn continents heavy, all
 The rude original seen of nature, mate
 With heaven, all procreant parents they of forms
 Fate-ordered, crude products of matter, once
 Like firstlings on the axis, altarwise,
 Laid, of the globe, earth's testimony still stand
 To her creative God ; who, in the heart
 Of nethermost darkness, his miraculous name
 Scores legible, as upon the sun's broad brow,
 Mid blaze chaotic, and liquescent plains
 Of ever-seething flame, where sink and rise
 Alp-blebs of fire, vast, vagrant ; name which reads
 Perfection infinite in all ways ; all names
 Other of gods, obliterates.

LUCIFER. How but one ?
 Each star, canst tell ? may its divinity boast.
 FESTUS. God's hand hath scooped the hollow of this world ;
 His, sole, who all doth, and remembereth all !
 Or aim, or deed ; nor, like an atomie dropped
 Of meteoric light, some star, in's lightning rush,
 Hath brushed off, which is quenched in last night's dew ;
 Nor as, when fiery monarch, ireful, starts
 In jewelled arms war-wards, a sudden gem
 Falls, and, 'neath tramp of shouting hosts, is lost
 Am I, even I, forgotten. Ere blended, here,
 As in a bowl, the spherul rudiments lay ;
 Whence all elaborated in turn, and raised
 From shining star-seed into embryo orbs
 And germs gigantic of the universe ;
 Each mighty change a thought of God, each thought
 An act substantial of perfective power,
 Leaving at last prolific earth life-stored
 With light impregnated, I know right well 'twas planned
 For me, for man, his favourite. Even here,
 These blasts that tear tempestuous from the deep ;
 These throes that rack the centre, nature's wail
 For her directing lord, this many an age
 Missed from her midst, these elemental hells,
 Conflictive, earth's upheavals, founts of fire,
 And island vomitings, fail the sense to quench
 Of divine wardship ; nought permitting he,
 Though for a time self-hidden, and changeless laws,
 In mutable types, through ever-varying forms,
 Dispensing, proof of one continuous end,
 To happen his beloved of harm ; and this
 As holiest truth I hold. Didst bring me hither,
 Trusting to lose God's track ?

LUCIFER. Nay, but to show
 How things begin to end. Why, then, e'er made?
 This ball so rolled and rounded, melts away
 Even now, to its constituent atoms. See,
 This weary axis wavers in its end;
 It will sometime snap.

FESTUS. Though here were posited
 All secrets of existence, natural those,
 These supernatural, dwell not here would I,
 Not science' founts profoundest even, to drain.
 I long to know again the fresh green earth,
 Breeze life-breath'd; sea, and sacred stars; and feel
 In active comity with the world's wide powers.
 These recollections crowd upon my mind,
 Like constellations on the evening skies,
 And will not be forbidden. Oh! let us leave.

LUCIFER. Aught that reminds an exile of his home
 Is surely pleasant. I, friend, am content.

FESTUS. I cannot be content with less than heaven;
 Living, and comprehensive of all life.
 Thee, universal heaven, celestial all;
 Thee, sacred seat of intellective time;
 Field of the soul's best wisdom: home of truth,
 Star-throned; by whom, and old oracular night,
 Our spirit compeers in every orb are taught;
 Who can but love? To me, by night, by day,
 Thou art, thou must be reverend, world-whole sphere!
 Whether the sun all light thee, or the moon,
 In clouds embayed, mid astral islets, air
 With beauty inundate; or some god-star, sole,
 As a great drop of light, shed tremulously
 Out of her full flowing urn; yea, tearlike, fallen
 From her, Night's eye, o'er nature's tome, as she
 Reads, softening so our present fates; or when
 In radiant thousands, each star reigns, unshared
 His royalty, and leaderless, uncontrast
 With the light their light is lost in, sons of fire,
 Arch element of the heavens; thee, even, when storm
 And rack, our vision from thy threshold bar,
 More love I, thinking upon the splendid calm
 Which bounds the deadly fever of these days,
 The higher, holier, spiritual heaven wherein
 Soul, predisposed to expatiate, shall start forth
 On joy's relapseless course; and such progress
 As counts the infinite only in its midst,
 Feliculously partake. Come, let us rise;
 Nay, quit this world, within whose heartstrings still
 I know me encoiled. The deeper I descend,
 The higher rise, the nearer seem I God.

LUCIFER. It is knowledge only makes thee near to aught,
 Whence ignorance most eloids. These rocks, which hold
 Time's cavernous footsteps printed in raw fire

Detain thee, then, no more ?

FESTUS. I would be gone.

The world hath made such comet-like advance,

Lately on science, men may almost hope

Before it die of sheer decay, to learn

Something about their infancy, as this day

I have taught me of earth's original.

LUCIFER. True ; but me

This troubles not.

FESTUS. Were all earth's mountain chains

To utter fire at once, what a grand show

Of fireworks for our neighbour moon.

LUCIFER. The passed

Hath seen such sights ; and I ; seen grander. Rise !

Let us ascend.

FESTUS. But not through the charred throat

Of an extinct volcano.

LUCIFER. This way ; down ;

So thread we at once the world-bead.

FESTUS. Haste, away.

Life is too brittle, time too brief to waste.

XIII.

All man's acts,
 Serious or trivial, all man's thoughts perchance
 Pass not unmarked of angel eye, or God's.
 We know in daytime there are stars about us,
 Just as at night, and name them what and where,
 By sight of science ; so by faith we know,
 Though till our night we see them not, that spirits
 Are round us, and believe heaven may be full
 Of angels, as of star-motes night's white zone.
 A brief but solemn parley o'er a grave,
 Earth's hollow threshold of futurity,
 Observed by spirit invisible, aptly heads
 Holiest resolves ; and, be they kept, enough
 To assure the heart of peace. Each soul must tread
 Singly his doubt-press. Time too soon fulfilled,
 Leads to a promised proof of progress gained
 By spirit on high, late loved, enlightening thus,
 Premonstrative, our end.

A Church-Yard.

FESTUS and LUCIFER beside a Tomb.

FESTUS. It is not God we doubt of : it is one's self.

How can the separate soul, and most, if pure,

Exist distinct from God ; if perfect not,—

As who shall vaunt, even hers ? how re-unite ?

Is he the perfect, the defectible, too ?

Here, everywhere, the spirit one holy word,

Preacheth, in multitudinous tongues ; in birth,

Growth, blossom, fruit, collapse of life, and rise
 Regenerative of being ; the saving truth,
 Congruous with man's first faith, world-wide, in God
 And in the soul-adjusting future, shown
 Resurgent by these grave-sprung flowers. For grant
 We die, nor nature cherish more man's frame,
 Than her dead leaflets, still to have lived conform
 With reason's law, and virtue's fine delights ;
 To have kept intact the spirit's purity ;
 To have revered, believed in others ; hoped
 And suffered for, in pains we would not lack ;
 The soul's inborn religion, dear to God,
 And those who nature love ; while but to have dreamed
 Of one great Being, the absolute good ; who joys,
 And waits, to impart to spirit, duly affined,
 Reunion with himself, true bliss ; the just ;
 The supreme virtue ; whose immense repose,
 Actful, not idle, while to him vast scope
 Leaving administrative, to us reserves
 Deliberate choice ; our fleeting, cloudlike lives,
 Of his persistent firmamental soul,
 Contrast and like ; seems in itself to assure
 Our being of permanency , and well nigh proves
 Not immortality only, but cognate
 Divinity, that such vast and godlike dreams
 Man's brain could sanely guest.

LUCIFER. How sanely, friend ?

FESTUS. Oh yes, this sense of the infinite, born in man,
 Cultured or wild, of one sole essence, God,
 The governing conscience of all spirit, the same,
 Continuous, his and ours ; salvation seems ;
 A rock æthereal, this, sky-based, which shows
 Us, like originate with the eterne of heaven.
 For, as who the leaflets of the aye-moving plant,
 Though of proportions delicatest, first eyes,
 Instinct with circular freedom, even of spheres
 Suggestive, ultimately, and heaven ; and, awed,
 Marks, as in preference moved, this frond or that,
 By some sufficing motive, if to us,
 Occult ; so shapes mysteriously, through ghost
 Or natural spirit of earth and air, man's mind
 As out of self-necessity, to pursue
 This grandest and most perfect mould of thought,
 The thought of deity ; man's best good, of all
 Rich, poor, participable.

LUCIFER. Good ; let the world
 Work out its mingled fates, closed thus, or thus.
 'Twere well, not grow too heavenly, all at once.

FESTUS. When life is most about one, power and proof
 Of human foresight ; some new conquest won
 By science from the vast unknown ; some gift
 Of art, which shall outworth a nation's debt,

Heirloom of ages, sealed to earth for good ;
 And through all lands, one smile man's general face
 Lights up, self-glorifying ; oft, then, I feel
 Sunkenest in soul, most faltering in the sense
 Of spiritual reality : and, in turn
 'Midst base corruption's trophies mazed, as here,
 And stony tablets dropped from Death's grim tome ;
 Even in the marble palmed and cavernous grasp,
 His hollow hand arched like a charnel house,
 Holds, never slackening, of its prey, once won ;
 Most hopeful, most assured of being.

LUCIFER. To see
 Nature's sad wreck, on this, life's undercoast,
 Cast, and to deem still, something, somewhere, 'scapes
 By salvage, speaks strong faith.

FESTUS. How is't I love
 The spirit of this fair creature, earthening here,
 If not in nature ?

LUCIFER. May it not be, thou lov'st
 Her memory, less herself ?

FESTUS. Nay, hear, sweet spirit !
 Let years crowd in, and age bow down
 My bosom to the earth, which gave ;
 As yon grey, worn out, crumbling stone
 Dips o'er the grave ;
 Though passion me no more should thrill,
 Nor pleasure please, nor beauty move ;
 Though the heart stiffen, and waxed still,
 No more make love ;
 Still, in my breast, like river gold,
 Imbedded bright, thy love shall lie ;
 Sun-grains, that with the sands are rolled
 Of memory.

Still, let me hold what bliss the spirit enjoys
 Is that thou hopedst here, couldst ne'er forget.

LUCIFER. It may be that death's dewy slumber cloy's
 The soul, as yet.

FESTUS. Surely, that soul hath burst the tomb,
 Long while, enrobed in living light ;
 Not being accursed, wormlike, to eat the gloom
 And dust of night.

LUCIFER. Oh surely life, in sporting on earth, lies
 Till death share up the rich green sod ;
 But soul ! if there it lives, or here it dies,
 Why try ye God ?
 What should it never smile nor sigh
 From cheeks or lips but those beneath ?
 Outweighs not love the world's vast lie,
 Bests life not death ?

FESTUS. I ask why man should suffer death ?

LUCIFER. Answer, what right to life hath he ?
 God gives, and takes away, your breath.

What more have ye?
 Breath is your life, and life your soul;
 Ye have it warm from his kind hands;
 Then yield it back to the great Whole,
 When he demands.
 Why, deathling, wilt thou long for heaven?
 Why seek a bright, but blinding way?
 Go, thank thy God that he hath given
 Night upon day.

FESTUS. It may be but illusion, then, the all
 Of marvels thou hast shown?
 It may be that the wreath-tricked, trailing pall
 Closes all known?

LUCIFER. Go, thank thy God, that thou hast lived;
 And ask no more. 'Tis all he gave;
 'Tis all he wills, to be believed;
 God and the grave.

FESTUS. For thee, God, will I save my heart
 For thee my nature's honour keep;
 Then, soul and body, all or part,
 Rest, wake, or sleep.
 Yet, might it be, a strange desire my breast
 Hath seized, I know not how; it is as though
 A meteor of the night had there sought rest,
 And burns within me, her to view once more
 Whose form here lies.

LUCIFER. In sooth, I saw a light
 But now, to thee, it may be, invisible,
 Which showed me here her spirit, close urging on
 Its moonbeamed path, some sister soul to impress
 With the arms of fortitude, or widowed heart
 Perchance, with patience' humbler crest. Perchance,
 We are like to have enough of that.

FESTUS. There are,
 Who her help merit and need; and doubtless have,
 Should others justly lack.

LUCIFER. If, once for all
 To gorge thy passion for the unknown, I show
 Herself to thee, with clear sight in her own,
 Blessed home, thou wilt aid me first to other ends
 More pressantly required.

FESTUS. More than to view
 Goodness perfected?

LUCIFER. Yea, even power assured.

FESTUS. Command. Thou art ambitious for me.

LUCIFER. Good.
 The inevitable sequences of things
 Like an art-ordered torrent, made to amuse,
 Run themselves dry.

FESTUS. Heaven speed the time with me,
 The sun of life shall mount the skies no more,
 It is one eternal setting. My burden is

Henceforth, the spirit.

LUCIFER. Nay, divers quests be ours ;
And at the occurrent season each shall claim
Of us, due recognition.

FESTUS. Be it. Away !

XIV.

In one of earth's
Head cities, awaiting this, the effect unknown,
Of evil, not, truly, all-wise, we towerlike rise ;
With eminent but indifferent eye survey,
Subdue, in thought, society, now in all
Its greater grades seen. Secret science, since
Divert to aims of power mysterious, schemes
For freedom, wealth, airs ; war's surcease ; and spread
Of mind-light, social virtue. Here the germ
Of universal sway, sought from the first,
See posited, striking, round an inner world,
Its roots intelligible, but not till the end
Destined to fruit ; love, friendship, faith, all things
Ministrant. Plans all feasible, shadowed out,
Of one sublime humanity purified,
Warm even the civic air. And shall not God's
Own peace crown man pacific ?

A Metropolis ; Public Place.

FESTUS and LUCIFER, STUDENT, and OTHERS.

FESTUS. My thoughts go, cloudlike, round the world, nor rest.
I am on fire to realize the fate
Which darkly, in the future's depths, thou hast shown ;
Or else am with the mightiest folly mocked
E'er impeded a soul to madness ? How, meanwhile
Our ends differ ? Can we for mellowing suns
Wait ? When shall earth acknowledge me ?

LUCIFER. Not now
Never, till self-compelled. The time will come.
Have patience. It is the blessing of the angels.

FESTUS. Patience ! say slow self-murder.

LUCIFER. Wait for what
Is on the wing already, or reach the end
As of an aimless lunge i' the empty air.
Knowledge, love, power, are thrones thy soul shall sit
In order due as promised. Patience, man !
We are as yet but minors, both of us.

FESTUS. Of pleasure one has hardly had a glimpse.

LUCIFER. Each pleasure hastes thee to thine end, and man's.
Each new sought joy, each freshly proven power,
But draws the end of all things like a hood,
Around thy fated head the closer. Come.
Bethink thee of thy pact.

FESTUS. I do ; a pact
Where abstinence only serves to quicken pain ;
Indulgence, shorten pleasure. Which to choose,
To let alone, which, wiser ?

LUCIFER. In them both
Is reason : but all-wise, man will never be.

FESTUS. Nay, come then, pretty patience. Sand by sand,
The world is worn away ; the sea hath sapped,
How oft ! earth's vaulted base ; times countless whelmed,
'Neath his abysmal bowl, the mountain tops.
'Tis but a matter of days. Most greatest things
Are gradual. Star on star, the heavens fulfil
Their issue ; and truth quickens here the soul,
Dipped in substantial lightning of the sun
Spiritual, and with the eternal saving saved,
By every breath inspired of God. I yield.
Let us to that near hand : the end, deferred.
Life to enjoy, not only one must conform
To the world's laws, but bye-laws, customs, moods.
What can be done here ?

LUCIFER. Oh, a thousand things
As well as elsewhere.

FESTUS. True ; it is a place
Where passion, occupation, or reflection,
May find fit food or field.

LUCIFER. Take we our ease
Beside this feathery fountain. It is cool,
And pleasant ; and the people, passing by,
Fit subjects for twin moralists like us.
Here, we can speculate freely on policy ;
On social manners, fashions, and the news.
Now the political aspect of the world
At present, is most cheerful. To begin,
Like charity, at home. Out of all wrongs
The most atrocious ; the most righteous ends
Are happiest wrought.

FESTUS. Ofttimes it chances so.

LUCIFER. Take of the blood of martyrs, tears of slaves,
The groans of prisoned patriots, and the sweat
Wrung from the bones of famine, like parts ; add
The stifled breath of man's free natural thought ;
The tyrant's lies, the curses of the meek ;
Vapour of orphan's sigh, and wail of all
Whom war hath spoiled, or law first fanged, then gorged ;
The usurpations of the lawful heir,
The common weal, which comes to its own, all done ;
The treasonous rebellions of the wise ;
The poor man's patient prayers ; and let all these
Simmer some centuries, o'er the slow red fire
Of human wrath, and there results at last,
A glorious constitution, and a grand
Totality of nothings ; for what's all

Weighed with man's destiny ?

FESTUS.

Of recipes

Enough. That man's a warful animal, [Soldiers pass; music.

Glories in gunpowder, and loves parade,

Prefers them to all things, see present proof.

Life's but a sword's length at the best.

LUCIFER.

Past doubt.

Bar-iron, duly smelted, rules the world.

FESTUS. How many things want remedying. What next ?

LUCIFER. Well, in this seat of empire, by this head,

And nucleus of a nation world-famed, sit

And name your remedies ; for, sick to death

Well-nigh, and perishing of rank rotting sores,

That gilded plasters hide, are all these burghs ;

Huge populous solitudes, where penury pines

Mid havoc of excess ; while guileful wealth

Serves, tremblingly, behind the public board,

Pale want, his stomach stiff from sheer default

Of exercise, is pressed to join, and thank

Compulsory charity, interested to give ;

Or, back to shadowy feasts where all things lack ;

Save appetite to destroy. What's wanted here ?

FESTUS. Nought but a total change ; true, honest, life,

Holy and simple ; peace ; a cheerful faith

In God ; and nothing spent not purely earned.

LUCIFER. Utopian, I much fear. But look here comes

A man thou knowest.

FESTUS.

I do. Stop, friend, of late

I have not seen thee. Whither goest thou now ?

STUDENT. I am upon my business, and in haste.

FESTUS. Business ! I thought thou wast a simple schemer ;

A theorist of most nebulous mark and views ;

Founder of many imaginary states ;

And student of all arts impracticable.

STUDENT. Mayhap, I am. There is a visionary

Business, as well as visionary faith.

My nature is more to sympathize with men,

Than in their actual aims participate.

What these by traffic strive to attain for themselves,

I seek, by the hidden mastery, to achieve

For others. Let but fruit my next thought,—then,

Bid me compete with states, and watch who wins.

FESTUS. And holdst thou faith in the art alchemic still ?

Still seekst secluded in the ravenous search

For gold to verify thine earlier hopes ?

STUDENT. Though mingling more with men, my mind is yet

Leased to the great invention. I, in sooth,

Have all my life been living in a mine,

Lancing the world for gold. I have not yet

Fingered the right vein. Oh ! how oft I wish

The time might come again, pert science prates of,

When earth's bright veins ran ruddy virgin gold.

LUCIFER. When next the world's gold melts 'twill run, I fear,
A pretty steep course towards its natural end.

STUDENT. Oh ! I am not without my moderate hopes.
When in earth's first foundation as an orb,
Her giant elements held, like god-kings, sway
Free, and successive heritage, each his gift
Made earth, to mark his long illustrious reign.
Air, water, with prolific forms and fair,
Their realms made vital ; with grain, herb, the mould ;
With tall trees towering cloudwards, thousand yeared ;
Fire, with all ore, gem, marble, stained with dyes
Stolen from the infant sun, when feeble he lay,
In the orient cradled ; and that earth might not,
Mid the first passion of her golden prime,
Exhaust all joy, each power some art arcane
Penned for the cherished future ; and to Time,
Earth's scribe and heaven's remembrancer, consigned
The opening of their treasured archives. These,
We, who now hold the keys of wisdom, read ;
Translate the fiery tongues of obelisks ;
Revive the blackened brain-craft of old scrolls,
A score of centuries tombed ; light's radiant chords
Peel naked to the stars ; weigh air, theirs, ours ;
Count off the sun's vast rudiments, and his brow
With vaporous iron crown ; apt compliment
To our own stern age. One secret only, still,
Of moment, lacks ; and this found, earth may rest,
And reap unusual joy. It is my main hope.

FESTUS. Were all rich, nothing left but gems and gold,
All things less pure, less precious, all beside
Were worthless, penniless. But what crowds of things
Life hath, more worth than wealth ! When, viewed the world,
We mark the mighty ignorance of the mass,
In all lands, their huge servitude of mind,
And think, what sometime it would be, to see
Freedom and wisdom substituted, thought
Fails ; and the heart faints at the vast conceipt.

STUDENT. Truly ; but not for gold, as ore, I slave.
As means subservient only to some end,
Great and beneficent, world-wide ; end I scarce
Thus casually can name, but holy, high,
And in the face of all earth's worn-out frames
Of civil power, dynastic, popular, all
Alike effete, right justified.

FESTUS. So ? I hear.

LUCIFER. For this end, gold is needed.

FESTUS. I perceive.

STUDENT. For universal liberty, gold, and more,
Wrongs must be rectified, rights established.

FESTUS. True ;
Where'er a wrong exists, a right is quelled ;
And wrongs seem everywhere. Serfs I despise,

For nations, if so, must so be, by choice.
 Tyrants, or many or one, elect or born,
 I hate. But how will justice-loving time
 Reckon with all the despots, many and mean,
 Who falsify, by weight of brands and chains,
 The balance civil hath over savage life ;
 Who knows ? That Mercy may be satisfied
 By so much Justice sweeps, with level hand,
 From off the measure's head, we'll hope.

LUCIFER. Yes, hope.

FESTUS. Hope retributive Mercy may succeed
 Her sterner sister Justice, and aye reign
 In parity with love. For know, while God
 Sits, judging 'mid the heavens, and all things made
 Governs by infinite laws, each several sphere
 Owns yet his special equity. Even on earth,
 A vast invisible seat he hath, like aged
 With the unwandering hills. In every soul's
 Instinct of right ; in all just sympathies ;
 In every conscience, sensitive to the truth,
 As skies to light ; in every innocent heart,
 Whose strings, like angel lyres, are tuned in heaven ;
 Built into being, as though its corner-stone,
 Towers, core of rule, this seat ; and when, crushed down
 By popular wrong of kings, or tyrannous crime
 Of crowds, man's prayer, to him appealing, steals
 Skywards, a shock convictive through all hearts
 Shoots : and men's eyes, disfilmed, strange sense receive,
 Undreamed of : view, there, in their veriest midst,
 The eternal Presence, throned. His judgments, there,
 Be very sure are executed : his fines
 To the last blood drop paid. Oh may at last
 Earth's Lord to all be merciful ; but now,
 Let God be just ; 'tis all we need. I hear,
 As faith his gifts recounts, by man misused,
 Heaven's reasonable demands withstood, the groans,
 Like to an earthquake thundering underground,
 That shake, tempestuous, Time's repentant breast.

STUDENT. Wait, wait ; not long. The Rectifier will rise ;
 A purer and more righteous æra come.

The crowd of kings, the sovereignty of crowds,
 Shall alike pass, and perish. Time shall be,
 When earth one state, the lord of peace rules all,
 Deep in earth's caverned heart, self-hidden, I see,
 Her loins with wisdom's silver serpents girt,
 The Nemesis of nations. Stern she sits
 Her monumental throne. The hush of death
 Spreads round her, halo-like. Even Hope, her friend,
 Oft deems her dead. Yet lives she ; live she will.
 She hath a vital secret in her breast,
 As though she nursed a god which scarcely breathes,
 The freedom of the future. To all else

Superior, in that secret, nought beside
 Heeds she : but hears indifferent o'er her head,
 The ebb, or flow, of empire, and the march
 Of militant generations ; and but smiles,
 And rocks her foot, contemptuous. Not for these
 Moves she, nor is she moved ; nor cares she watch.
 Wordless of joy or woe, say why is she
 Incarcerate ? why abandoned ? why suspect
 Even of the pure ? why in her cell by all
 Her lover kings forgot,—could one who hath eyed
 Her pale and dominant brow, and mounded breast
 Elate with life, nor shuddering shrunk to meet
 That stately stare, ever forget ? Away !
 Name not old wrongs. If wrongs have been, be sure
 Some day will right them. Know, she hath never been
 Save by her own serene assent, exiled
 From the upper earth's face. What then doth she there,
 Darkling in central solitudes ? Alas !
 Of her divine prevision all devoid,
 Unwelcome and unworthy suitors she
 Hath, many an one, who her to rash attempt
 Of empery would entice, and so secure
 Her forfeit royalty ; wicked these nor reck
 God's patience, or her own, prayer-wrung, to abide
 The hour of destiny, and the award of love,
 The liberator, fore-chosen. For when the dew
 Now wet, hath ripened into the thunder-cloud,
 And man's breath made God's lightning, one shall come
 Who, of things passed intolerant, but divine
 In mercifulness, and prompt ere all to free
 The captive, and, to the exiled, home restore,
 Shall ope her seal'd hand ; tear out the spell
 Of silence' self invoked eclipse, for ends
 Then gained ; and give a spear ; her queenly brow,
 Which ne'er hath stooped before, shall sanctify
 With a crown, more holy than the wall-culled wreaths
 Of cities sieged, saved by their sons ; and, so,
 Lead her compassionate forth with him to head
 Revived, regenerate manhood. Speed it heaven !
 That we the dawn of that great day may see,
 If not for all its mightiest outcomes spared.

LUCIFER. This is the spirit I want to see abroad.
 We two can aid each other. Spread these views.

STUDENT. The wise and good wish well to liberty,
 Throughout all lands ; but aim to win her cause
 By some bold movement, from the heart of all
 United nations. Generous souls all joy
 To see man's serf, risen up, a prince with God.

LUCIFER. The movement might be secret, nor its end
 Till finally, divulged.

FESTUS. Be it as ye will.
 Not, e'er, by war.

LUCIFER. From age to age old Time
Hath washed his hands in the heart's blood of earth.
It's rather late to speak against it, now.

STUDENT. If without war the world could live one year
'Twere well. Yet fields of death, ye are earth's pride,
For what is life to freedom? War must be
While men are what they are ; while they have had
Passions to be roused up : while ruled by men ;
While all the powers and treasures of a land
At beck of the ambitious, wrongs may be
Offered, with insult ; yea, while rights are worth
Maintaining, freedom keeping, or life having,
So long dread I, the sword shall shine.

FESTUS. Yet war,
All save the spiritual war we wage within,
Shall cease. Thy next thought ?

STUDENT. Ah, the crowning schema
I hinted ?

FESTUS. Yes, this golden badge ; what may it
Imply, so patently concealed, displayed
So critically ?

STUDENT. It means, I have joined myself
To certain circles of the wise ; a new
Consociate power, intrinsic to all states,
Self vowed in sacred bonds to holiest ends ;
Who, worshipping one sole Lord in heaven, would choose
One sole on earth, peace thus ensured ; mankind's
Free brotherhood, and whole unity. To this end
What want we ? Wealth, time, numbers, secresy.
For this, all powers subordinate of the earth,
All social schemes, all frames of government
Are now essayed, tried, treated with ; all wealth
Sought variously ; all wisdom of the passed,
All faiths that move men's souls, and dominate still ;
Convergent forces, are folded one by one
Within our politic plan ; plan which, at last,
By virtue of rational necessity, must
Make sure, God aidant, earth's whole common-weal.
But how this unity to achieve of choice ;
And how, by act, inaugurate and complete
This grand concerted good, seems yet a knot
Time's wearied fingers work at till they bleed,
And baffled races vainly pray for. Such
Our failure.

LUCIFER. Such shall be no more. My plans
Are ripening faster than I thought, than need.

STUDENT. Wilt come with me and join this lordly host
Of brethren, friends of God, to whom pertains
The gift of the world's future ?

LUCIFER. Well, we have plans.
Our auricrucian friend could doubtless make
His banded brotherhoods well subservient here,

To views, but lateliest treated, of our own.

FESTUS. True, if a few, illumined with all truth,
Initiate in all wisdom, hidden and open,
Armed with all wealth, could but forefit the world
For perfect freedom, Man might wish no more
Than add to freedom, peace ; and to peace, power.

STUDENT. Be ours.

FESTUS. I love the initiates wise ; but doubt
If freedom e'er, with wisdom, prove the lot
Of all, or most.

LUCIFER. Hands seem for manacles made :
And feet for fetters.

STUDENT. Join with us.

FESTUS. I'll think.

STUDENT. Teachers of base societies still abound,
But we and all our ends are peaceful, pure,
To dignify the mass, refine the race ;
To make man lord not slave of all the means
Mechanic science owns, and give each child
Of earth a tangible share in all his age
Inherits, or of mind, or aids of life
Material, grounded all on God's just laws.
This is what knowledge ought to bring mankind ;
Not ceaseless toil, strife, war, nor want ; but life's
Free use and reasonablest enjoyment ; peace
Unanimous 'neath one head the wise and good
Of nations shall elect ; who knows, one day,
Who shall be chosen ?

LUCIFER. The end we now foreglimpse.
And in the flow of this one stealthy vein
Through the vast body of man, the use can trace
Of all our future means.

STUDENT. 'Tis gold we want ;
Not men to bribe, but honourably repay
Pure life's, and thought's expenditure ; to spread
'Mong men, due knowledge of all bettering truth,
And found the kingdom of perpetual peace,
Sole base of perfect life.

FESTUS. To such good ends
Means henceforth I can promise shall not lack.

STUDENT. Who can foresee the future, helps forecast.
A peaceful revolution through all lands
Shall course ; and seizing all state powers, to one
Sole hand transfer them ; universal peace
So settled for all years. War's armaments,
War's waste of wealth, time, thought, and life ; its griefs,
Its pains, its wounds immedicable ; its woes,
Gone, how the world shall prosper, and attain
All proper perfectness. Join thou with us
And we'll together preach these sagest plans.

FESTUS. I have passed through all the elements of the world ;
Sea's depths, air's heights, the central fires, while 'neath

My feet antipodal thunders pealed ; round earth,
Coast, continent, desert, isle, and fruit-fraught plain,
In all their various vastness ; and have viewed
Nought venerable in them, of source, nor force,
Self-causative or divine ; save vassal powers,
Obsequious to the ends designed of God,
Cohærent made, and vivified, by laws
Inborn with them, imbreathed, nought. Ocean's tides
Poured o'er my head, in seas, for ages, never
My spirit to meaner faith could disbaptize
Than God's most proveable fatherhood of the world,
Material, mental, spiritual ; his just
Rule of't, and loveful care ; himself the soul's
Sole trust, judge, saviour, meed. In this faith firm,
Can any truer be ? no tests I dread.

STUDENT.

Nor needst,

Thy creed, as ours, hallows, enshrines
The essential truths of all ; these brief ; these few.
How vast ! Thus minded thou art most meet to join
Our rational rites, and sacred feasts, truth holds ;
Orgies divine.

FESTUS.

Of God, or nature ? Comes

Of this, a sorrow unfruitful, and woe-filled.
Her mysteries teem with shrieks of struggling souls,
Doubt's cavernous darkness, and remorseful fires,
I'd not endure for worlds. But heaven's bring bliss ;
Light, peace, and soul-joy, such as he the sun,
Felicitative, instils in all that live.

STUDENT. Fear nought, but prove them. Else am I losing time.

LUCIFER. Nay, time is never lost, if friends are made.

Promise. They all shall aid in our great aim.

FESTUS. I will advise me. And when next we meet,

What my resolve, without all fail, expect.

STUDENT. We surely all again meet.

LUCIFER.

Haply not.

For me I am but poor company. Deem me, rather,
As some returnless meteor, from all ties
Of amity or obedience loosed, that flings,
Careless, his starry store mid space's fields ;
Nor, in revisited spheres, dreams e'er to reap
The harvest of his hand. But, touching gold
I have a secret I would fain impart
To one who would make right use of it. Now, mark.
There are fifty elements, chemists say, and more.
Get, then, these fifty principles, or what not.
Mix up together : put to the question, all.
Teaze well with vapour, fire ; much triturate.
Add the right quantity of lunar rays.
Boil whole, and let it cool ; and watch what comes.

STUDENT. Thrice greatest Hermes ! but it must be. Yes !

I'll go and get them ; good day,—instantly.

LUCIFER. He'll be astonished probably.

FESTUS. He will;
In any issue of the experiment.
The nostrum may perhaps explode, and—

LUCIFER. Nonsense.

FESTUS. There needs no satire on men's rage for gold,
Their nature is the best; and best excuse.
But what for aims like these our friend intends,
Seeing they march with ours, we will provide.
Fear not; our mint not all man can exhaust.
Some news seems stirring.

LUCIFER. One of Saturn's moons,
I heard, had flown on his face, and blinded him.
It was also said, in circles I, at times,
Enter, his outer ring was falling off.
If I should find, I'll keep it. It might fit
A little finger such as mine. I doubt
Poor Saturn's breaking up. But for these news;
Some one perhaps has lit on a new vein
Of stars in the far void, or made out at last,
The circulation of the light; or what
Think'st thou?

FESTUS. I know not. Ask!

LUCIFER. Sir, what's the news?

PASSER-BY. The news are good news, being none at all.

LUCIFER. Your goodness, sir, I deem of like extent.
We heard the Great Bear was confined of twins.

STRANGER. It is not unlikely; stars do propagate.

FESTUS. And so much for civility and news.
This city is one of the world's social poles,
Round which events revolve; here, dial-like,
Time makes no movement but is registered.

LUCIFER. Yon gaudy equipage! hast ever seen
A drowning dragon-fly, floating down a brook,
Topping the sunny ripples as they rise;
Till, in some ambushed eddy, it is sucked down,
By something underneath? Thus with the rich!
Their gilding makes their death conspicuous.

FESTUS. This man is nobly rich, that, nobly poor;
These, the reverse. Rank makes no difference.

LUCIFER. The poor may die in swarms, unheeded. They
But swell the mass of columned ciphers earth
Runs up without a thought. Oh wretched poor,
Woe-bowed, thank God for something, though but this,
He fire, ye ashes!

FESTUS. Thou art surely mad.

LUCIFER. I meant to moralize. I cannot see
A crowd, and not think on the fate of man;
Clinging to error, as a dormant bat
To a dead bough. Well, 'tis his own affair.

FESTUS. All homilies, on the sorts and lot of men,
Are vain and wearisome. I desire to know
No more of human nature. As it is,

I honour it, and hate it. Let that do.

LUCIFER. Here is a statue to some mighty man,
Who beat his name on the drum of the world's ear,
Till it was stupefied ; and, I suppose,
Not knowing what it was about, reared up
This marble mockery of mortality ;
Which shall outlive the memory of the man,
And all like him, who water earth with blood,
And sow with bones, or any good he did,
As eagles, gnats. But failures why indict ?
Why carp at insect sins, or crumb-like crimes ?
The world, the great imposture, still succeeds ;
Still, in Titanic immortality, writhes
Beneath the burning mountain of its sins.

FESTUS. There's an old adage about sin and some one.
The world is not exactly what I thought it,
But pretty nearly so ; and after all,
It is not so bad as good men make it out,
Nor such a hopeless wretch.

LUCIFER. For all the world
Not I would slander it. Dear world, thou art
Of all things under heaven by me most loved ;
The most consistent, the least fallible.
Believe me ever thine affectionate
Lucifer. P.S. Sweet, remember me !

FESTUS. Wilt go to the cathedral ?

LUCIFER. No, indeed ;
I have just confessed.

FESTUS. Well, to the concert, then ?

LUCIFER. Some fifteen hundred thousand million years
Have passed since last I heard a chorus. How ?
In sooth, can I time calculate ? æras none
Are in the eternal. Time is as the body ;
Eternity, the spirit, of existence.

FESTUS. That would I learn and prove.

LUCIFER. The finite soul
Can never learn the infinite, nor may be
Informed by it, unaided.

FESTUS. Be it so.
What shall we do ?

LUCIFER. I put myself in your hands.

FESTUS. Wilt go on 'Change ?

LUCIFER. I rarely speculate.
Steady receipts are mostly to my taste.

FESTUS. But something must be done to pass the time.

LUCIFER. Let us, then, pass all time.

FESTUS. Good ! pass ; but how ?

LUCIFER. I have the power to make thy spirit free
Of its poor frame of flesh, yet not by death ;
And reunite them afterwards. Wilt thou, think,
Entrust thyself to me ?

FESTUS. In God I trust,

And in his word of safety. Have thy will.
Where shall it be effected ?

LUCIFER. Here and now.

FESTUS. What of this heap of accidents, properties,
This mock essential, shade on shade impinged,
Redoubled to the likeness of a form,
This outward humanhood ?

LUCIFER. Oh heed not that.

Body may like a shadow wait on thee,
And thou not know it. Soul may be so fine.
Recline thou calmly upon yon marble slab,
As though asleep. The world will miss thee not ;
Its complement is perfect. I will mind,
That no impertinent meddler troubles there,
Thy tranced frame. The brain shall cease its life
Engrossing business ; and the living blood,
The wine of life, which maketh drunk the soul,
Sleep in the sacred vessels of the heart.
Three steps the sun hath taken from his throne,
Already downwards, and ere he hath gone,
Who calmeth tempests with his mighty light,
We will return ; and until then, the bright rain
Of yonder fountain fails not.

FESTUS. Thus be it.

LUCIFER. One of my minor failings is, I fear,
I am too indulgent. I make pets of men ;
And they fool me. The eastern sage of old,
Who for each fancied privilege paid by stress
Of strange austerities gained not half what thou
Only of will canst compass. Will and rise.

FESTUS. Come ; we are wasting moments here that now
Belong, of right, to immortality,
And to another world.

LUCIFER. Prepare !—

FESTUS. And thou ?

LUCIFER. I vanish altogether.

FESTUS. Excellent !

LUCIFER. Body and spirit part !—

XV.

Even while a star
Might twinkle twice, or calm, retiring sea,
Irresolute yet to leave, his moonlit kiss
Shimmering repeat upon the impassive shore,
The arch-fiend and youth, bound skyward, soaring hold
Darkly, commune, like twilight and midnight,
Of being and things to be, 'mid interspace
Of worlds. The angelic fall is touched on. Soul
Imperfect, mixed, not seeing how deity could,
Pure spirit, by act of will aught earthy, gross
Frame; nor ill's source, end, understand; mistaught
By adulterate truth which poisons more than pure
Falsehood, hears how, of angels made, not God
Who would not with the earthy soil his hand, our orb
Had all its parts constituent cast by palms
Depute, tale told to mislead perchance. Yet who
Heaven granting place and means of penitence,
Irrestorable shall name the angelic race?
Who fiction blame, mother of fairest hope?

The Interstellar Space.

FESTUS and LUCIFER.

FESTUS. Where, where am I?

LUCIFER. We are in space and time, just as we were
Some half a second since; where wouldst thou be?

FESTUS. I would be in eternity and heaven;
The spirit, and the spirit made blessed, of all
Existence.

LUCIFER. And thou shalt be, and shalt pass
All secondary nature; all the rules
And the results of time. Upon thy spirit
These things shall act no more; their hand shall be
Withered upon thee; in thee they shall cease,
Like lightnings in the deadening sea. Not now.
We have worlds to go through first. But see, just turn
Thy face, see earth.

FESTUS. How beauteous, brighter thrice
Than e'er our lamp to man; just mean 'twixt sun
And moon, its mighty members, sea and land,
Shining, in revelry of light.

LUCIFER. Cleared now,
All atmosphere terrene, and meteor zones,
Into this darkening azure, deeper aye
At every breath, where reigns eternal night,
Haste we; thy longings shall be satiate soon:
For see, we rise, ever rise; and I, as in dream
Incorporeal, like an echo of oneself,
Float on the inscrutable aether; or from here,
Springing the arch of space to yon extreme,
With absolute levity seem as I might to bound.

FESTUS. Ah! many have been my longings, many and deep,
To learn the mysteries of creation; things

Not published on earth's surface.

LUCIFER.

Such as, say,

FESTUS. Thou first didst promise me to unfold ; and now
Our time, and this vast progress, seeming smooth,
Continuous, e'er without end converse invites.

LUCIFER. Speak confidently.

FESTUS.

Before man's fall I'd know

How was't the angels fell ?

LUCIFER.

Nor all by one

Revolt, nor one decline.

FESTUS.

Say how.

LUCIFER.

Time was,

When God, one, sole, in ancients' eterne,
In essence, inconceivable, all extent
A luminous fulness filling, willed to make ;
Withdrew a portion of his essence ; breathed
The angels into being ; and in that space,
Girt by the infinite, the world became ;
Near to him, spirit, life ; matter, last of all,
And farthest from him ; willed, still. With this rose
The evil of life create, all possible sin.
The happy angels, to enlarge God's reign
Thinking, besought his leave to make a world,
From matter's vast residuous mass. Time was,
Earth beamed heaven's youngest orb ; which granted, they,
Armed with imputed deity, began
Instant the work orbific ; fire and all
The elements freed, the land from sea demarked,
Rock igneous from aquatic, clay from ooze ;
The continents made, the isles, the mountains, streams,
Lakes, fountains, plains, tree, herb and flower, all life
Vegetive, in fine, and brutish ; all that wings
Air, or swims sea, or treads, four-footed, earth ;
Or creeps, or glides. These giants made, these elves,
Apes, pygmies, such, the tall indignant cranes,
Angered by broken treaties, drove and drowned
In sea-pools, first of victories hight marine.
Those, Cœnim and Zamzummim of old writ ;
And those Hrynthursar called, who norwards held
Frore Jotunheim, fleeing oft at gods and men ;
Vain rivals of one heaven-planned shape, of man
By God in just majestic medium made.
And this, accepted, they with all gifts decked.
God taking thought, himself, of sun and star,
With whom to think indeed is to create,
He, to the formative angels gave the world
They had thus wrought out of chaos, and adorned
With every living miracle, and man
As head and end of all its dignities,
In delegate royalty to rule. Thus earth,
Thine earth, embraced of heaven, and core of space,
Was plenished, furnished, finished. The angels now

Longing to instruct man's mind, a chosen band,
 Out of their fair fraternity, depute,
 Who straight ascending, quit for heaven. So all,
 Bright and more bright, while starward they progressed,
 And touched the invisible threshold of the skies,
 These angels grew ; till as they neared the seat
 Where, close below the throne, bright Nature sits,
 Perpetual maid, perpetual mother-bride ;
 Sits, gladdening in her splendid offspring, spread
 Through space, star-spirits of seed divine, blessed heirs
 Of deity ; sits, serene ;—they, pondering, paused,
 Who seemed a constellation, all of suns,
 Tempting the zenith. Here, their quest resigned
 To God's sole will, 'twas here, accordant Fate
 The predetermined boon they asked, due powers
 Of God to perfect, that they loved conveyed ;
 And more, he, hearkening to such fervent prayer,
 Grants ; but ere yet dismissed, to them, to all
 In heaven assembled, speaks thus : Spirits divine,
 Immortals, hear ; go rule each one his lot,
 Self-sought, of grace appointed. To all tribes
 Of men shall prophets speak, and holiest souls
 Heaven-seeking ; heed they be of you truth taught.
 So teach them, that however with faith and truth
 Inspired, they serve God only ; reverence due
 Pay you, pay all ; but adoration sole
 To him who all things made, and sole, can save.
 Angels and spirit-hosts of prehuman strain,
 Levies of light divine innumerable, rapt
 All, sate in still assent, until one soul,
 Interpretant of heaven, and mind create,
 Tuneful and luminous as a singing star,
 Stepped into light, and in the immarbled ear
 Of the convergent infinite, sang to God
 Larklike, his lone lay, gratulant, worshipful
 Of him All-Wise. A cherub-choir the same
 In stateliest revolution, traced, truth-taught,
 Of power project through all effluxive spheres,
 Returning fined, exalted, perfected,
 In a perduring emblem all the heavens
 Still study, and with their centre-searching eyes.
 These things, though wholly comprehending not,
 Things passed, things coming, God the angels showed ;
 Whereat they trembled, and were troubled. Some,
 In place of proffering lowliest praise to God,
 And holiest thanks for leave to do his will,
 In those harmonious lauds the hosts had sung,
 Pleased with their works, cried, These created we.
 Sudden, the stars stood silent. Every sphere
 Ceased its divine accord. The sun paled. All,
 That proud presumptuous vaunt, shuddered to hear.
 Divisions reigned. There were, who Godwards kept

Due loyalty ; and these withdrew to heaven,
 The Angel of Salvation, Phanuel pure ;
 Sun-ruling Ouriel, Luniel, and the rest,
 Peers of the fallen, once, and holy seven,
 Supplanted, round the throne, their brethren. These,
 For some were more sin-tainted, others less ;
 Earthwards rewinging, in prospective pride
 Enriched it thousand-fold with all delights.
 For men they sowed herb, spice, grain ; planted flower ;
 Fruits luscious grafted on trees ; silver and gold
 Dight earth with, ore, and marble, and every gem ;
 Gems larger lovelier these, than all now known ;
 And that smaragdine mirror, their chief toy,
 Which all the angels wrought, each gifting it
 With some unique perfection, after owned
 By Israel's wisest, who the tongues of bird,
 Brute, angel, men, all, knew ; and who therein
 Looking, the wished-for passed, of any age,
 Beheld apparent, as in the instant fact ;—
 And when, solicitous of the future, he
 Had breathed thereon, with the evanishing reek
 From its talismanic disk, limned clear, he saw,
 And all the coming conned. For men they chose
 The sites of cities, after, seats of power,
 Wealth, law, religion, learning, freedom ; one,
 The city of the dead, men for themselves
 Founded in ominous haste, and fast bestrewn
 With skeleton foliage of the tree of life.
 God made man free. He fell. His freedom seen,
 The angels asked allegiance of man's race.
 And while some mixed with carnal follies drift
 Hellwards, on storms of passionate covetise ;
 By rank and vile inventions, to man's ill,
 Earn othersome God's wrath ; no few through pride
 In their first formative privileges ; in thought
 Reigning triumphant, independent gods,
 O'er men, shared sept and tribe among them ; each,
 Launched on his own wild will ; and thus they ceased,
 Those once most virtuous angels, that pure choice,
 And grateful excellence the first had, to own ;
 Seeking at first their names, each to his clan
 To magnify, and so become, by aid
 Of mean, or monstrous, miracle, their gods ;
 In lieu of teaching men, the One Supreme
 To worship, God. Fell many an angel thus.
 The fall is universal in all spheres.
 For finite spirit, wherever tasked to keep
 The counsels of divine perfection fails.
 The starry story of one primal pair,
 Twin pillars to the portals of life's fane,
 Or free-born deities, free as stars are fixed
 And the celestial serpent, sun-conceived,

Invader of heaven's annual paradise,
 Wants not, where'er is life ; but graved in rocks,
 Rude missals of millennial patriarchs,
 Incised in arrowy Zend, on tabled clay—
 On palm foil penned, or purple pulp of flowers
 Illumed with every literal grace, or writ
 On virgin vellum rose-gilded and perfumed,
 Shrined in the bosom of some cloistered saint,
 The same sad tale perpetually commands
 The astral annals of the universe.
 A separate interest 'twixt themselves and God
 Insinuate once, like conflicts 'mong themselves,
 And schemes of empire basely politic, sprang.
 One name of God each took, or masculine
 Or feminine, deity having justly both,
 Who Father is, and bringer-forth of all ;
 Some title of divinity, none save God
 Could equitably assume, that so they, vain,
 Might, as lords substitute, the rights receive
 Due to the alone Eternal, and his name
 Blot from the hearts and memories of mankind.
 Such were Baal Semim, Lord of heaven, whom old
 Phœnicia worshipped ; such too, league-invoked
 In Syria as the lord of waters, he
 Whose covenant witness was the e'erlasting well ;
 He, such, by Nile, Hephaistos, father of fire ;
 Aurmazd or Ilus, such ; who when he had bade
 The Persian bow before his so-called throne,
 The sun, and claimed, phantastic, to have made
 Espendernad, earth's fair tutelard, bright Khourdad,
 And all the seven great angels, lit the stars,
 Father himself of light ; his strength reserved,
 So feigned he to his prophet, for that strife
 Final and all composing, 'gainst his power
 I name not, lord of evil, but in Yezd
 Prudentially still worshipped, from the world
 Routed, to be, with three-fold thunder fires,
 As chiselled glorious on the Assyrian slab ;
 Vain boasters all these mock divinities ; such
 Whom Asian tribes hailed, dove-born, mother of heaven,
 And 'mong their mingled gods the Nasairÿ claimed,
 Lady of light ; those who in sequent years
 In the holy and lovely island of the west,
 As lords of light, of fate, of wealth, of power,
 Gifts, glories were adored ; such, latelier known,
 Mid deeps Pacific isled, Mōooi, stretched
 Full length, gigantic shorer-up of earth ;
 High title his, Sustainer of the world.
 But soon in angel breasts, ill passions bred,
 And multiplied to wrongs ; developed ill
 Evolved more perfect sin, till, frantic stricken,
 Men cursed their benefactors, cursed and scorned.

These, fabling of the future, bade their seers
 Read signs in moving spheres, coin chanted lies
 Which, doubly feigned, deceivers self-deceived,
 From tripod trolled, or maundered from dim shrines,
 And brazen idols, inwardly excavate,
 Whereby false faith, or rich voluptuous fraud,
 Might in murk night self-satiate, triumph. Thus,
 Contentious 'mong themselves who most should reap
 From man's credulity, allwhere triumphed wrong.
 Oppression followed rivalry ; full soon
 Symbols and signs of terror were, in place
 Of love, God's own and holiest title, ta'en ;
 And the divine to finite passion changed.
 Then first the primal lamb whom spring's warm breeze,
 Its pearly flowers and brooklets bubbling clear,
 Welcome, newborn, 'neath sign connate in heaven ;
 Next, human victims bled ; and passed the babe
 Through baptistry of blood or fire, to peace.
 Such offerings, loathed by heaven ; while stormiest wars,
 Each striving most to widen his domain,
 Propelling his adorers to invade,
 Root out, and ruin all of faith opposed,
 Angel with angel waged, and god 'gainst god.
 The heavens were rent with lightnings, and the fields
 Of interjacent space, as the high powers,
 Now heated to malignity, oft closed
 In thunderous conflict, till the fire breath'd hills
 Grew iced with fear ; and quaking earth beneath
 Reeked with the gore of brethren, brethren slain.
 So, while 'gainst heathen, heathen, kin 'gainst kin
 Streamed foe-wise in embattled war-waves ; mowed,
 With scythed cars, earth's man-eared crops ; of wealth,
 Peace, culture, states despoiled ; while every land
 Red rapine reaped, and idiot famine fed ;
 While maid and mother, eld and childhood, ate
 Grief's heart, and drank the tears of woe, hell, know,
 Agape for pitiless spirits, and o'er men's wrongs
 Retaliative, content, groaned deep delight.
 The angel of the ocean-flowing Nile,
 And he who Hermon's heights and Lebanon held ;
 These, who the honours of the plains, and those
 Who river, sea, or several planet claimed ;
 And he who, where Hiddekel gulphward darts,
 Ruled with an absolute crown, for ages, strove,
 With changeablest success, but changeless woe.
 So, too, the Median angel and the Greek,
 Contending, fanes and altars were o'erthrown,
 Defiled ; and myriads, militant devotees,
 Through vain ambition of immortals, slain.
 One thing was common to all nations, woe.
 Sin, vice and luxury, with their flower-wreathed rods,
 Ruled and chastised the nations ; race by race,

Slaughtered, made, like that cruel tower Shirauz
Once held, of bodies breathful, limed with blood,
Time's generations, layers of death.

FESTUS.

Not all :—

Or vainly read I earth's recorded passed,
Was surely bale, nor with life blight ; to man
One sweet exemption, by God's grace, pertained ;
One gift diviner than the angels gave,
Or took away, by them o'erlooked, but given
From heaven's own treasury, all their mutual ire
Could ruin not, nor pervert ; love, nought but love ;
Parental, filial, conjugal, and divine.
Life's armies were recruited still by love ;
Fond hearts still grew affection, as fields grain ;
Still bloomed and fruited with an inward life,
And vintage of delight ; still youthful breasts,
Reciprocally fired, imparted joy,
Imported rapture ; tenderest converse, still,
Sweet as the whisperings of imblossomed trees,
Or the low lisplings of night's silvery main,
Lived on the lips of lovers, then as now,
By fount or mead, or wandering, moon beguiled,
'Neath tall white cliffs, along the unshadowed shore.

LUCIFER. In sooth not all was sorrow, nor all sin ;
Many too reckless lived to grieve ; who died
Early, died guiltless of much crime ; not all
Was ill, then. Not the less, priest, bard, nor mage,
From oracles, nor from mystic orgies ; none
From secret source, nor patent ; ghostliest runes,
Nor rolls of birchen bark, with mighty lay
Of divination, graven in branchèd signs,
Ere dim tradition ; not from tablets rich
With Auscan god-lore, and angurial rites
Of volant fowl ; from cane, nor palm-leaf, drenched
With sacred scents, in gilded Pali penned,
Could whisper to the world one saving spell ;
One sacred secret snatched from jealous heaven ;
That might the house of death illume ; nor aught
From oracles Sibylline ; Klarian fane ; nor cave
Delphic, of holiest ambiguity, sought ;
Not Rabbin versed in Kabalistic lore,
Nor echoing daughter of the spirit voice ;
Nor spherul talismans, nor star-graved seals,
Whose influences, worlds, elements, all pervade
Could raise in life one soul to peaceful hope,
Death-passed, of ultimate union with the Light
Intelligible, of being. Nought hence could save.
Retrack their steps the angels scorned ; nor deigned,
From holiest truths eliminating all false,
To help reharmonize with God, man's mind ;
But, as misplaced of purpose, blent their rites,
That so from mystery mystery still might come,

And no solution, no salvation, soul
 Sufficing, issue. Virtue, without end
 Was preached of, taught, discussed, belauded, sung ;
 But as in theories of best life, men grew
 More skilled and perfect, so in practice worse.
 Nor all philosophies, nor their devotees,
 'Vailed aught ; not his, who held the all was God ;
 Not his who first from heaven to earth deduced
 Philosophy, and then from earth to heaven
 Retraced the soul's path by immortality ;
 Nor his, the sometime slave's, surnamed divine,
 Rich in Egyptian wisdom, and all lore
 Hellenic, who in Academe taught, well pleased,
 The teacher of earth's conqueror, and the hearts
 Of tyrant kings softened by gratitude ;
 Not they who, in the Porch, oft dreamed aloud
 Their passionless figment of humanity ;
 Nor he who, in the Garden, vainly taught
 Pure pleasure as man's truest mark and end ;
 The pleasure of just virtue, one with God's ;
 Whose words the hearts corrupt corrupted they
 Aimed but to purify ; not he who scorned
 All things, nor he, all doubting ; not even they,
 Manly and moderate, honest friends of truth,
 Who all the tenable points of others chose,
 And in one system starred. Nor better fared
 The dubious mind, elsewhere, intent on truth.
 To some, in every land, of soul reborn,
 The gifts pertained of wisdom, life and peace ;
 But who the multitudinous mass should teach ;
 What truths unfold, and what more shrewd reserve,
 The wisest men were doubtfullest, and believed
 The ultimate indifference of all deeds,
 All thoughts, all motives, all intents ; the best
 Were erring guides ; to most man's life but showed
 A bridge of groans across a stream of tears.
 Again the giant world-sphinx, winged with air,
 Sun-faced, star-maned, tailed with the rolling sea,
 And breasted as beseems the dam of all ;
 Who nourisheth men and beasts ; her riddle reads.
 And this time, she the knot divine propounds,
 Of how may man with God be reconciled ?
 Who solves, earns well the purple ; and thenceforth,
 With ominous and curse-worthiest glory, wears
 His gold-spiked crown. But ah ! his end is woe.
 He to his fate uneyes himself in vain ;
 His tomb is in Time's chasm ; and all along,
 Oracular thunders further quest forefend.
 In every generation of his kind,
 Hero, or priest, or bard, or sage, or king,
 There lives but one can solve.

FESTUS.

And all were dumb !

LUCIFER. But now that times, of old foretold, drew nigh,
 God, the most highest, compassionating the plight
 Of wretched mortals, thus with reason blessed
 But with material nature cursed, devoid
 Of guide infallible, or of standard pure,
 And ground beneath the crushing rivalries
 Of disobedient angels, sent on earth
 His spirit-anoointed prophet, soul heaven-born,
 To preach true knowledge of heaven's Lord, that faith
 In him alone supreme, he might retrieve
 To earth's bewildered nations, and the reign
 O'erthrow of angel-kings who thrall'd the world
 With their most false misrule; and, in their front,
 The haughty and presumptuous spirit-chief,
 Who, one stern family of Semitic seed
 Choosing, inhibiting brotherhood from the hour
 When out of Nembrod's wrath, and Assur's land,
 The idolatrous Chaldees' demoniac fires,
 And city, itself a realm, of Nin-Evech,
 He brought the father of the faithful; ruled
 His wayward chosen in all their wanderings,
 Rebellions, servitudes; and, by him led forth
 Lateliest from Goschen, in K'naan now 'bode:
 He, boasting God to teach, the sole, most high,
 But elsewhere with the unequal angels linked,
 Confused of doctrine:—tremble not, but hear.
 Men cried aloud to God, God, pitying man,
 Eyes, in sublime compassion, man below;
 And mercy, unto the semi-angel, man,
 Flows from the vision. God, long-suffering, acts.

FESTUS. At length we touch the hem of history's robe.

LUCIFER. The chosen and some even gentile tribes at one
 In this fanatic craze like treacherous gusts
 Inflated with, and all delusive all
 Blew rivalrous from their lips of prophecy.
 What, then was so predicted, could but come.
 Comes now the liberator of soul, the saint
 Of saints; the preacher of forgiven sin;
 On due repentance between earth and heaven;
 The great Pacificator.

FESTUS. Went not wild
 The world with joy?

LUCIFER. Indeed not.

FESTUS. Was no clash
 Of sword on shield, hence useless but for hive
 Of swarmful bees? No bruit of brazen trump,
 Pealing its joyous requiem o'er dead war?
 No world-wide murmurs of expectant joy,
 Too mighty to be uttered, or repressed,
 From myriads heard? No arch triumphal reared?
 Earth's cities showed no revelry? No domes,
 Nor Parian pillars chapter'd with flame

Of flower-wreathed lamps, respiring odorous oils ?
 No festal halls with floral rainbows spanned,
 And bannered silks with silvery ciphers wrought ?
 No gilded car ? No team of creamwhite steeds,
 In housings pranked of purple and pearl ? Came forth
 No mitred priest, his path of peace to charm
 With benedictions, pouring at his feet
 Long-templed treasures, ransom of a race ?
 Their trenchant trade nor smith, nor armourer, ceased ?
 Seemed there no universal pause from pain ;
 War ; now of heaven discountenanced, and God's truce
 Of promise, made perpetual ?

LUCIFER. Since that day
 The world hath made more war than e'en before ;
 And this man's followers, mad to prove him prince
 Of peace, have soaked, and still steep, earth in blood.

FESTUS. In grace of such high advent, figured forth,
 By sagest seer, in sacred dance and game,
 Showed not the sphered skies their mysteries, then,
 In honour of God's fatherhood first preached
 Of all men, and man's brotherhood ?

LUCIFER. Nay, thou dreamest.

FESTUS. Glared not the hills with joy-fires ? Made the kings
 No feast imperial ? Bled not fountains wine,
 With gush luxurious into marble meres ?
 Nor prince nor kingling largesse gave to churl,
 Nor freedom to those bond ? No ? Loosed not heaven,
 When, masked in manhood, earth he dignified
 By touching with his feet, as once the wave
 While he to faith a golden pathway showed,
 Self-interested, from out its depths, some noon
 Eclipsing orb, that missioned thus of God
 Man's spirit to purify, and exalt with proof
 Of immortality, all earth's souls might learn
 His entrance into life ?

LUCIFER. Thou knowst the tale.
 So it was not.

FESTUS. No, thus : One pale pure star,
 Fresh coined of God, like that which on the lap
 Of astral queen, sphere-throned, for later worlds
 Leapt forth ; this, marked of none but three ; through air
 Glode slowly ; and towards a newborn babe, so came
 Earth's prince of prophets lowly, that night
 Of wintry snows, by her who bare cave-cribbed,
 'Mid lowing oxen and adoring herds,
 Pointed with rayonnant finger, and retired.

LUCIFER. Foretold or not by stars, or wingèd suns,
 This seer of seers who humblest lived, his words
 Well-like profoundly clear, and, deeper drawn,
 The purer showing, his entire life one long
 Perpetual miracle, who to preach the truth
 And men buy back to true faith in one God,

Lived solely, was by treachery base, inspired
 Of th' apostate angels colleagued, seized and slain.
 Thousands revered and loved him ; one betrayed.
 For this, for man's own sake, and for the ill
 Strife rivalrous 'mong these celestial powers
 Caused, God deposed the angels ; and, their seals
 Of sovereignty annulled, they cast, as bidden,
 All, into black oblivion ; even as since
 In mountain tarn volcanic, throne and crown,
 Sceptre, and all regalia, golden gauds,
 The imperial pagan of the west, though he
 Justly, to baulk his conquerors base,—implunged ;
 In time to come, some needy fisherman,
 At close of day, with his last throw, perchance,
 Shall joyful net, a mass, if weed-webbed, foul,
 And once a despot's diadem, may yet
 Burnish to brightness fit for holiest shrines.

FESTUS. Thus, too, may it be with the angels, once consigned
 To purifying penance, loth henceforth
 Even in thought, God's unity, like intense,
 Like infinite with this onemost heaven, to break.
 Is there for such no hope ? None ? Nay, I see
 Hope's dawn in far-off skies.

LUCIFER. Keen-eyed one, cease.
 When spirit that springs from Being's eternal fount
 Led down through all life's elements, lapse of time
 And tact of sense concurring, hath at last
 Its earthlier dross precipitated, and again
 Bound lightwards, in its course self-clarified,
 Reflecting God, as ocean in his breast,
 Booklike, the starry transcript of the skies
 Holds, so all virtuous and celestial powers
 May look for like communion ; but so long
 As separateness of self, and turbid touch
 Of world-love or of passion, dim the soul,
 Never ; be it theirs or thine. But thine, even now,
 Bears the design of earthliest discontent,
 Not sacred satisfaction. Now to him
 Whose soul is saved all things are clear as stars,
 And to the chosen is sense of safety : this
 None else, nor cold insurgent heart, nor mind
 Menial, can compass. It is the way of God,
 The starry path none tread but spirits heaven-high,
 Who were of him before all worlds, and are
 Beloved and saved for ever, while they live.
 Thou of the world art yet, with motives, means
 And ends, as others.

FESTUS. I will no more of it.

LUCIFER. Oh dream not that. Thou knowest not the depth
 Of nature's dark abyss, thyself, nor God.
 Thou mayst yet rise and fall oft as the sea.

FESTUS. And those thou tell'st of ?

LUCIFER. It may be with them,
Light overstrong and darkness overlong,
As with thyself, blind alike eye and mind.

FESTUS. But I foresee.

LUCIFER. At least, thou dost forejudge.

FESTUS. How comes it then, being spirit, I see not all
As spirit should ?

LUCIFER. Thou lackest both life and death ;
Earth's death, heaven's life. Then wouldst thou see with God,
And know creation's strife in harmony
With him, and 'mong its separate parts, how raised,
And ordered why.

FESTUS. Death alters not the spirit.

LUCIFER. Death must be undergone ere understood.

FESTUS. One world is as another. Rest we here.

LUCIFER. See, thus men count of destiny. All is chance.

XVI.

Thence to a happier planet—for 'twas his,
Whose soul, streamlike, the images of stars
Immirrored in its surface, stealing, while
At its boldness trembling, knowledge of all spheres
Predisciplinary, to reap ;—where, blessed, we meet
The spirit just glimpsed the first night of temptation ;
Thenceforth the soul's instructress. The prime steps
See, of the angel spirit, earth-trained to good ;
Immortal, self-perfectible ; whose deep thoughts
And lofty musings sow in us the seeds
Of higher nature, brighter being. The muse,
Especial faculties raised and vivified, there,
Hail ; heavenly poesie hail ; all mental powers
Outlustring, even as this, eve's dewy star,
All worlds. The searchful soul, bent to evoke
From all intelligence its especial spell
Of union with truth universal, seeks,
Earth meditating, and in the future plunged
Of mind's advance, our nearest, saddest light.

The Hesperian Sphere. Another and a better World.

FESTUS, LUCIFER, ANGELA.

FESTUS. Sweetest of worlds ! which, Lucifer, is this ?

LUCIFER. This is the star of evening and of beauty.

FESTUS. Otherwise Hesper. I will stay here.

LUCIFER. Nay :
It is but a visit. As the morning star
Some know it, too ; but these, a wakeful few.
I have no interest in it.

FESTUS. Let us look
About us. Heaven, it is, it must be ! Aught
So beauteous, must have feeling. Cannot worlds live ?
Least things have life : why not things greatest, too ?

An atomic is a world, a world an atom,
Seen relatively ; and death an act of life.

LUCIFER. This is a world where every loveliest thing
Lasts longest ; where decay lifts never head
Above the grossest forms, and matter here,
Is all transparent substance ; the flower fades not ;
But every eve gives forth a fragrant light ;
Till, by degrees, the spirit of each flower
Essentially consuming it, the fair frame
Refines itself to air ; rejoining thus
Its archetype, and preëxistent. Here,
The beautiful die not ever. Death lies all
Adreaming ; he hath nought to do : the babe
Plays with his darts. Nought dies but what should die.
Here are no earthquakes, storms nor plagues ; no hell
At heart ; no floating flood on high. The soil
Is ever fresh, and fragrant as a rose ;
The skies, like one wide rainbow, stand on gold ;
The clouds are light as rose leaves, and the dew,
It is of the tears which stars weep, sweet with joy.
The air is softer than a loved one's sigh ;
The ground is glowing with all priceless ore,
And glistening with gems, like a bride's bosom ;
The trees have silver stems and emerald leaves ;
The fountains bubble nectar ; and the hills
Are half alive with light.

FESTUS. The very blush
Of being ; it is surely too a maiden world,
Unmarred by thee. Touch it not, Lucifer.

LUCIFER. It is too bright to tarnish.

FESTUS.

Didst thou fail ?

LUCIFER. I cannot fail. Success with me is nature,
I who am cause, means, consequence of ill.
Yet is't not heaven.

FESTUS. Oh, no. And would I change
Earth, with her desert breast, and wood-wavy brow,
Fickle though oft, even fatal, for this round
Of delicatest realities ? Nay, I love
Earth's woods to haunt when the storm bends his bow,
And volleys all his arrows off at once ;
And when the dead brown branch comes crashing close
To my feet, to tread it down, because I feel
Decay my foe ; and not to triumph's worse
Than not to win. It is wrong to think on earth ;
But terror hath a beauty, even as mildness.
And I have felt more rapture even on earth
When, like a lion, or a day of battle,
The storm rose, roared, shook out its shaggy mane,
And leapt abroad on the world, and lay down red,
Licking himself to sleep, as it got light ;
Ay, in the cataract-like tread of a crowd,
And its irresistible rush, flooding the green,

As though it came to doom, than ever I could
 Feel in this faëry orb of show and shine.
 I love earth !

LUCIFER. Thou art mad to dote on earth,
 When with this sphere of beauty. Nay, conceive.
 Thou canst not yet enjoy a sensuous world,
 Refined though ne'er so little o'er thine own,
 And still wouldst enter heaven. Valhalla's halls,
 And skulls o'erbrimmed with mead ; cities of gold,
 Cities of silver ; temples roofed with light ;
 God-home and glory-land ; Elysian plains,
 Where peace and pleasure, endless, cloudless joy,
 And ever-ripening bliss, enrapture all ;
 The Buddhist's blessed Nirvana, half between
 What is, and what is not ; the Chaldee's orbs
 Of gold, where wons the primal light intense ;
 The high celestial mountains, bright with hues
 Spiritual of heaven, Brahm loves, and Siva holds,
 So pure that snow would stain, and dew defile ;
 Where music, and her sister beauty, song,
 Each, time by time on other leaning, haunt
 The waters of immortal life, which flow
 So fables feign in everlasting lapse ;
 Nor other sustenance need, nor can endure ;
 The pearly palaces and odorous groves ;
 Forms heavenly, infinite brightness, and of souls
 The starry transmigrations, they who home
 By the amber main, believe their lot, past death ;
 The Aztec's burning heaven, where living clouds
 By warrior souls informed, sweep round the sun
 Ceaseless ; rise, fall, at will ; an earth-life now,
 Or heaven-life had, in turn ; whose sword-play make
 Lightning, whose voice in battle, thunder, they
 Warring on high ; the Moslem's love-bowers, streams
 Of wine, and tents palatial, gem illumed ;
 Where dark-eyed houris with the endearing arms
 White, ever virgin, woo and welcome ye ;
 Eden, where life, toilless, at least, gave man
 All things to live with, nothing to live for ;
 Were, all, too pure for thee. Yet shalt thou be
 Surely in heaven, ere death unlock the heart.

FESTUS. Lo, here are spirits, denizens of the sphere,
 I doubt not, fitly fair ; and, strange ! all seem
 To love each other.

LUCIFER. He hath but half a heart
 Who loves not all.

FESTUS. Speak for me to some angel.
 See, here is one, a very soul of beauty.
 Nay, 'tis the Muse. I know her by the lyre
 Hung on her arm, and eye like fount of fire.

MUSE. Mortal, approach. I am the holy Muse,
 Whom earth's best spirits adore ; her chosen choose.

It is I who imbreath the soul into the lips
 Of those great lights whom death nor time eclipse ;
 It is I who wing the loving heart with song,
 And set its sighs to music on the tongue ;
 It is I who watch, and with high thoughts reward,
 For every thing I love that's pure and bright,
 The holy aspirings of the youthful bard.
 'Twas but this morn, with the first wink of light,
 A sunbeam left the sun ; and as it sped,
 I followed, watched, and listened, what it said :—
 'Straight from the sun I part ; and though have passed
 Since bidden of God, and in heaven's centre cast,
 Worlds, ages, dooms, yet I am light to the last.
 And though, foreseen, the world's air warps our way,
 And crops the roses from the cheek of day ;
 As some false friend who holds man's all in trust,
 Oils his decline, and hands him to the dust,
 Yet all our God shall once bend to his will,
 Is sacred, to be loved, or borne with, still ;
 We know not what may be ; we bide what must.
 If such then fate, to speed unwavering on
 My path, be mine ; though fate and fall be one.
 For what's this swift, this bright, but downward being,
 Too burning to be borne, too brief for seeing ?
 What is mine aim, mine end ? Would I expire
 Grovelling in common dust, in sea, air, fire ?
 Help avarice pelf to heap, war wreak his ire,
 Or light the loveless to their low desire ?
 No ; but if favouring fate which, urged from God,
 Here vivifies a heaven, and there a clod,
 Grant me but this request, death's pang to assuage,
 'Twould be to perish on the poet's page,
 Where, kissing from his beauty's brow all age,
 Bespelled for ever fair, and wrinkle scorning,
 As when first that brow brake on him like a morning,
 He, with adoring spirit, creates the line
 Which leads, by mortal beauty to divine,
 Man's soul. For this end, earthbound though, I come,
 I'd live, die, go down gladdening, to my doom.'
 It said ; and saw earth ! and one moment more
 Fell bright beside a vine-shadowed cottage door.
 In it came ; glanced above a glowing page
 Where youth foreshortening and forestalling age,
 Weak with the work of thought a boyish bard
 Sate suing night and stars for his reward ;
 The unwrought crownlets which to bards belong,
 And bloom perennial in their sacred song.
 The sunbeam swerved and grew, a breathing, dim,
 For the first time, as it lit and looked on him ;
 His forehead faded, pale his lip, and dry ;
 Hollow his cheek, and fever fed his eye ;
 Doubt-clouds lay round his brain, as on a hill

Broods the incipient storm, unvoiced ; and still,
 Quick with the thunder thought, and lightning will.
 His clenched hand shook from its more than midnight clasp ;
 And his pen fluttered like a wingèd asp ;
 Save that no deadly venom blacked its lips ;
 'Twas his to enlighten life, and not eclipse,
 Nor would he shade one merit owned by other,
 To have a sphere his slave, a god his brother.
 Still sate he, though his lamp sunk : still he strained
 His eyes to work the nightness which remained.
 Vain pain ! he could not make the light he wanted ;
 And soon thought's wizard ring gets disenchantèd.
 When earth was dayed, was morrowed ; the first ray
 Perched on his pen, and diamonded its way ;
 The sunray that I watched, which, proud to cease
 Mid some fair line, inspired of love and peace,
 Died, in the only path it would have trod,
 Were there as many ways, as worlds, to God ;
 Died ; in his eye again to live and burn,
 As nature's glory all to heaven's shall turn,
 When truth's immortal sunbeams guide his pen,
 And love his heart who, God-taught, teaches men
 They may be all they most aspire to be,
 Their longed-for end, their earliest destiny,
 Whose aim in life is truth and sanctity.
 For earth-life is but being's dawning ray ;
 And hadst thou suns in day as stars in night,
 And each, of heaven perfective, towards God's day
 Thy soul brought, still, its highest, truest right
 Were, luminous, to rejoin his full-sphered light,
 Before whose face creations pass away,
 As cloudlets pass before the steadfast sky,
 Or as years, time's arrows 'fore eternity.

FESTUS. Thanks ! With the Muse is always love and light,
 And self-sworn loyalty to truth. For know,
 Poets are all who love, who feel, great truths,
 And tell them : and the truth of truths is love.
 There was a time—oh, I remember well !
 When, like a sea-shell with its sea-born strain,
 My soul aye rang with music of the lyre ;
 And my heart shed its lore as leaves their dew,
 A honey dew, and throve on what it shed.
 All things I loved ; but song I loved in chief.
 Imagination is the air of mind ;
 Judgment its earth and memory its main ;
 Passion its fire. I was at home in heaven.
 Swiftlike, I lived above ; once touching earth,
 The meanest thing might master me : long wings
 But baffled. Still and still I harped on song.
 Oh ! to create within the mind is bliss ;
 And, shaping forth the lofty thought, or lovely,
 We seek not, need not heaven : and when the thought,

Cloudy and shapeless, first forms on the mind,
Slow darkening into some gigantic make,
How the heart shakes with pride and fear, as heaven
Quakes under its own thunder ; or as might,
Of old, the mortal mother of a god,
When first she saw him lessening up the skies.
And I began the toil divine of verse,
Which, like a burning bush, doth guest a god.
But this was only wing-flapping—not flight ;
The pawing of the courser ere he win ;
Till by degrees, from wrestling with my soul,
I gathered strength to keep the fleet thoughts fast.
And made them bless me. Yes, there was a time
When tomes of ancient song held eye and heart ;
Were the sole lore I recked of : the great bards
Of Greece, of Rome, and mine own master land,
And they who in the holy book are deathless ;
Men who have vulgarized sublimity ;
And bought up truth for the nations ; held it whole ;
Men who have forged gods—uttered—made them pass :
Sons of the sons of God, who, in olden days,
Did leave their passionless heaven for earth and woman ;
Brought an immortal to a mortal breast,
And, clasping rainbowlike sweet earth, here left
A bright precipitate of soul, which lives
Ever ; and through the lines of sullen men,
The dumb array of ages, speaks for all ;
Flashing by fits, like fire from an enemy's front ;
Whose thoughts, like bars of sunshine in shut rooms,
Mid gloom, all glory, win the world to light ;
Who make their very follies like their souls ;
And like the young moon with a ragged edge,
Still, in their imperfection, beautiful ;
Whose weaknesses are lovely as their strengths,
Like the white nebulous matter between stars,
Which, if not light, at least is likest light ;
Men whom we build our love round like an arch
Of triumph, as they pass us on their way
To glory, and to immortality ;
Men whose great thoughts possess us like a passion,
Through every limb and the whole heart ; whose words
Haunt us, as eagles haunt the mountain air ;
Whose thoughts command all coming times and minds,
As from a tower, a warden ; fix themselves
Deep in the heart as meteor stones in earth,
Dropped from some higher sphere ; the words of gods,
And fragments of the undeemed tongues of heaven ;
Men who walk up to fame as to a friend,
Or their own house, which from the wrongful heir
They have wrested, from the world's hard hand and gripe ;
Men who, like death, all bone but all unarmed,
Have ta'en the giant world by the throat, and thrown him ;

And made him swear to maintain their name and fame
 At peril of his life ; who shed great thoughts
 As easily as an oak looseneth its golden leaves
 In a kindly largesse to the soil it grew on ;
 Whose names are ever on the world's broad tongue,
 Like sound upon the falling of a force ;
 Whose words, if wingèd, are with angels' wings ;
 Who play upon the heart as on a harp,
 And make our eyes bright as we speak of them ;
 Whose hearts have a look southwards, and are open
 To the whole noon of nature ; these I have waked,
 And wept o'er, night by night ; oft pondering thus :
 Homer is gone : and where is Jove ? and where
 The rival cities seven ? His song outlives
 Time, tower, and god—all that then was, save heaven.

MUSE. Yea, but the poor perfections of thine earth
 Shall be as little as nothing to thee here.

FESTUS. God must be happy, who aye makes ; and since
 Mind's first of things, who makes from mind is blessed
 O'er men. Thus saith the bard to his work :—Thy god
 Am I ; and bid thee live as my God me.
 Soul of my soul ! thou camest and went'st, sunlike,
 From morn to eve ; fire-smiling on this heart,
 Aforetime calm, until by passion's tides,
 Roused, and ambition's tyrannous gales it rose,
 And dashed about its house all might and mirth,
 Like ocean's tongue in Staffa's stormy cave.
 But wert thou fragile as the reed once filched,
 From heaven, in theft heroic, and with gifts
 Of world-vast change charged, still I hail thee fraught,
 With deathless fire, immortal as the breath
 Of God's lips, every breath, a soul.

MUSE. It is well.
 Mortal, the Muse is with thee : leave her not.

FESTUS. Once my ambition to another end
 Stirred, stretched itself, but slept again. I rose
 And dashed on earth the harp, mine other heart,
 Which ringing, brake ; its discord ruinous
 Harmony still ; and coldly I rejoiced
 No other joy I had, wormlike, to feed
 Upon my ripe resolve. It might not be :
 The more I strove against, the more I loved it.

LUCIFER. Come, let us walk along. So say farewell.

FESTUS. I will not.

MUSE. No : my greeting is for ever.

LUCIFER. Well, well, come on !

FESTUS. Oh ! show me that sweet soul
 Thou brought'st to me the first night that we met.
 She must be here, where all are good and fair :
 And thou didst promise me.

LUCIFER. Is that not she
 Walking alone, up-looking to thine earth ?

For, lo ! it shineth through the mid-day air.

FESTUS. It is, it is !

LUCIFER. Well, I will come again.

The more he views, the more 'tween God and him.

FESTUS. Knowest thou me, mine own immortal love ?

How shall I call thee ?

ANGELA. Soul, I know thee well.

I am a spirit, Festus ; and I love

Thy spirit, and shall love, when once like mine,

More than we ever did or can even now.

Pure spirits are of heaven all heavenly.

Yet marvel not to meet me in this guise,

All radiant like a diamond as it is.

We wander in what way we will through all,

Or any of these worlds, and wheresoe'er

We are, there heaven is ; there, and here too, God.

Nor deem still less thou art unwatched on earth.

Even when I saw thee by the grave, and knew

I was purely in thy thoughts, 'twas my soul's prayer

To God, who o'erorders all things in unseen

Control, and bends to his praise what hates him most,

As what most loves, thou mightst, sometime with me

Here meet, and quit thy mind of doubts. For here

Dwell many and wisest angels, many souls

Who have run pure through earth, or been made pure

By their salvation since. It is a mart

Where all the holy spirits of the world

Effect sweet interchange of knowledge ; truth

Barter for love, for love truth ; each enriched.

FESTUS. Thou dost remember me ?

ANGELA. Ay, every thought

And look of love which thou hast lent to me,

Comes daily through my memory as stars

Wear through the dark.

FESTUS. And thou art happy, love ?

ANGELA. Yes : I am happy when I can do good.

FESTUS. To be good is to do good. Who dwell here ?

Are they all deathless—happy ?

ANGELA. All are not :

Some err, though rarely, slightly. Spirits sin

Only in thought ; and they are of a race

Higher than thine ; have fewer wants and less

Temptations, more joys, greater powers. They need

No civil sway ; each rules, obeys, himself.

All as they choose, live ; choose but good. Who have come

From earth, or other orb, use the same powers,

Passions, and purposes, they had ere death ;

Although enlarged and freed, to nobler ends,

With better means. Here the hard warrior whets

The sword of truth, and steels his soul against sin.

The fierce and lawless wills which trooped it over

His breast ; the speared desires that overran

The fairest fields of virtue, sleep and lie
 Like a slain host 'neath snow ; he dyes his hand
 Deep in the blood of evil passions. Mind !
 There is no passion evil in itself ;
 In heaven we shall enjoy all to right ends.
 There sit the perfect women, perfect men ;
 Minds which control themselves, hearts which indulge
 Designs of wondrous goodness, but so far
 Only as soul extolled to bliss and power
 Most high sees fit for each, divinely. Here,
 The statesman makes new laws for growing worlds,
 Through their forefated ages. Here, the sage
 Masters all mysteries, more and more, from day
 To day, watching the thoughts of men and angels
 Through moral microscopes ; or hails afar,
 By some vast intellectual instrument,
 The mighty spirits, good or bad, which range
 The space of mind ; some spreading death and woe
 On far off worlds ; some great with good and life.
 And here the poet, like that wall of fire
 In ancient song, towers o'er the universe ;
 Lighting himself, where'er he soars or dives,
 With his own bright brain : this is the poet's heaven.
 Here he may realize each form or scene
 He e'er on earth imagined ; or bid dreams
 Stand fast, and faëry palaces appear.
 Here he hath heaven to hear him ; to whose love,
 Which lent him his whole strength, with mainlike voice,
 And song he thankful sings as is the wont
 Of all great spirits and good throughout the world.
 Oh ! happiest of the happy is the bard !
 Here, too, some pluck the branch of peace to greet
 A suffering saint with, and foreshow his flood
 Of woe hath sunken : this I love to do ;
 Who, late on Mercy's mission charged, thee heard ;
 Now, here ; but wherefore ask not : thou sometime,
 Shalt know, and known, and loving me, approve ;
 Rejoice in knowing.

FESTUS. Be it, loved one, as thou wilt.

ANGELA. My love, we shall be happy here.

FESTUS. Shall I
 Ever come here ?

ANGELA. Thou mayst. I will pray for thee,
 And watch thee.

FESTUS. Thou wilt have, then, need to weep.
 This heart must run its orbit. Pardon thou
 Its many sad deflections. It will return
 To thee and to the primal goal of heaven.

ANGELA. Practise thy spirit to great thoughts and things,
 That thou mayst start, when here, from vantage ground.
 By ceasing to be little on earth, a soul
 Effectually, grows here, half boundless, where

Knowledge of that we would, in being, ends.
 Our spirits what there they know and love, of things
 Divine, here greaten to ; for their final cause
 Their inmost end, their highest source in us
 Being God, soul-consciousness of whom is bliss,
 This, our celestial aptness for high ends ;
 World-lording will, ceaseless progress of mind,
 Ambition to do good, the mastery, sought
 With tears, of mysteries, and the exalting love
 Of all perfections, virtuous and divine,
 Our birth, our worth, proves ; and the rational soul's
 Most choice endowment shows ; whereby, demarked
 From lower intelligence, and with heavenly life
 Collate, we test the future as of God,
 Whose sealed recognizance we embosom here.
 For his eternal knowledge, rounding time,
 And all things in it happening, makes the world,
 To us one vast contingency, to him
 All certainty appear, whose note of things
 Their actual being precedes, as being, with us,
 Its noteableness ; who in himself all cause
 Or absolute or conditioned holds, and knows
 Of all his works by him begun, by man
 Continued, or let lapse, which sole shall end
 In sanctified perfection. If by us
 Conceived, accordant with his pure design,
 O happy we ! our life-leaf beams in heaven's
 Bright archives ; but time's parable misjudged,
 Misconstrued wilfully, defiled, distort
 To ends of him and us unworthy, find
 We may, to our cost, or blotted out, erased,
 Or, shrieking, from the eternal volume, torn.
 Thus, while each fateful only is to himself,
 We can foretell our future ; we foremake.

FESTUS. Speak to me of the future.

ANGELA.

Why alone

Of the to come ?

FESTUS. Because I love and dread,
 As might a vessel laden o'er-deep with gold,
 To cross a stream upon whose further side
 Safety allures, but in whose midst is death,
 The untold pleasures of the life my soul
 Is richest freighted with.

ANGELA.

God's supreme gift,

Whereby all beings gauge their high advance
 In heaven, to perfect joy, is this ; to learn
 The everlasting future. Less or more,
 All happy spirits can, as one with him.
 The more their power their longing is the less ;
 Contented with divinity ; but I
 Am only at his feet, not yet his breast.
 A natural sadness born, O Festus, born

Of the sad passed ; though passed, though sad, still dear ;
 Clouds yet my vision of eternal things ;
 And human love yet more than nothing seems.
 Oh ! speak not of the future. Speak to me
 Thou, of the passed.

FESTUS. Immortal ! from thine eye
 Wipe out the tear of time. The gates of hell
 Are barred upon the passed. Their hold is like
 The grasp of gravitation. Shall the passed
 Ever evade the death-clutch of the world ?
 No, they shall, like two cars, wheel locked in wheel,
 Roll down together to destruction's depths.
 Nay, rede me of the future what thou canst,
 Divine one ! heaven is in the possible.

ANGELA. Oh, once ere now I cast my spirit sight
 Into the orient future, to preview
 The features of thy lifelot ; but, alas !
 I saw what I were fain to have remained
 Unweeting of for ever. Now, once more,
 Thou wouldst revive my woe.

FESTUS. Nay, if it grieve thee,
 I will not wake the future. Let it sleep
 Till its time come.

ANGELA. Yet with that woe I saw
 A web of joy was woven for thyself,
 For me, for many, by the love of God ;
 Who, granting his own spirit to the form
 Of divinized humanity, unbuilds
 The superseded soul, and making all
 Spirits anew in him, doth make all one.
 This is the infinite calm which circumscribes
 All local lifestorms ; this the law of peace
 Constrains all strife ; the rule of bliss all woe
 Which disannuls. Haste, haste, thou blessed hour,
 To the divine fulfilment of the end
 Of total being.

FESTUS. Thus serenèd, speak on ;
 And with the sequence of my life forearm
 The soul that is within me. Angel, speak !

ANGELA. Nay, I am no celestial, worthy yet
 Of so high title as messenger of God ;
 But in the fire of love's refining flame,
 The love of God and good, with all these souls
 Around, self elevating, the great return
 Of made intelligence in high increment
 Of purity, towards its source most high, enjoy,
 And aid ; our being's aim ; of every scope
 Divine, the crowning reason ; gracious love
 Granting with joy each spirit's advised request.
 Hence at my prayer 'twas given me, as I said,
 The future to foresee ; and I beheld
 A vision of thyself begirt with forms,

Nay, more than one, of beauty ; though to one
Lovely and pure as loving, I thy heart
Had trustfully bequeathed ; but sad was this ;
And that was blithe of blee ; and that ; enough !
I cannot all denote them ; but I know
Malign I felt at first to see the heart
I loved, by them usurped. But when I thought
From these calm heights, of all earth's cares and woes,
And life's brief paradise, the hour of love,
And knew it aye a failure, as of old,
Though a divine experiment, I wept,
And prayed, and found forgiveness for my fault.
Seek to them ; choose. They all are in thy life
Blent, and as elements mingled in the cup
Creative of thy world. These twain are bound,
One, with temptations which the soul divert
Creature-wards from its Maker, not of need,
Not wisely, but too oft ; one, with the charms
If not forbidden, of secret knowledge, hidden
As harmful, to the spirit that seeks not truth
For herself sole. This dearest, first and last,
Shall teach thee perfectness, and guide thy mind
On earth, from truth to truth, as I from star
To star unseen, shall have led thee through the skies.
With her be happy. And as I looked, I found
Though 'fore each one, successive, as the fates,
Thy spirit did bow ; and none but in herself
Chastened, than I was happier ; yet in the end
All formed one family spiritual of love.
My soul then gladdened, and I knew that joy
The seal of my salvation. I beheld
All things rejoice beneath the light of love,
Which seemed to burn within me, and beam through,
Lost in the boundless loneliness of God.
I saw earth's war-scarred countenance sweetly glide
Into the angel lineaments of peace ;
And gentlest sorrow dream herself to joy.
Tears shed on earth were reaped in heaven in smiles,
And what was sown in sighs was raised in songs.
Rapt in this vision with ecstatic bliss,
Myself secure from all external chance,
As though the one pure atomie of light
Impounded in the centre of the sun,
Ere yet the end of all, methought I saw
Each beauty gathered by the careful hand
Of the great gatherer, who forgetteth none.
I felt my being brightened and made fit
For heavenly regions, gladdening in their glee,
And grieving in their grief ; as, with thine own,
One blessed fate I viewed involving all,
One everlasting end. All earthly love
Consumm'd with thine, I saw, made love divine.

For as the countless globelets of the dew
 Image each one the sun, so, in the dawn
 Of heaven's great day, the seed of God shall shine
 Each with his golden likeness in his breast.
 Thus far my vision. May the all-kind God,
 Who crowns creation with o'erflowing love,
 Bless it to thee ! And wouldst thou further know,
 Or of the passed, or the calm coming time,
 Seek yonder sphere serene ; for changeless there,
 In lofty and in lonely light sedate,
 The sibyl angel sits, star studying ;
 Two only things before her—heaven and earth.
 Her ask, and she will answer all ; nay, show
 Sometime, if friendliest trust mayhap, prevail,
 A wider scope of things, than spirit like mine
 Of heaven's novitiate, can control. And this,
 Albeit thyself to know is most of all,
 To know, yet soul-world it behoves thee search
 Ere called on high thou dream'st of entering Heaven.

FESTUS. Bound am I by the promised boon of one
 Who holds his spirit in fealty to his word
 To cross celestial thresholds, and the gates
 Pass of the invisible land.

ANGELA. That may not be.
 For lo ! there is written in the book of God
 This fate ; no soul on earth which lives, of Him
 Unbidden, unproved of justifying spheres
 Spiritual, can enter Heaven, or eye the light
 Intelligible of Deity, and not die.

FESTUS. It may be, I am bidden.

ANGELA. It may. And now,
 By me forebode, by sweetest Luniel there,
 Forewarned, foretaught, and fortified in soul,
 Retrieve thou the terrene. Endure, enjoy.
 Who rightly all conditions of life's law
 Fulfils, from death to happiest deathlessness,
 Proceeds, divinized. Mayst thou in holy joy,
 Thy spiritual birthright here reclaimed, aye live !

FESTUS. So shall it be : thy will and my deed, one.
 I do not fear to die ; for though I change
 The mode of being, I shall ever be.
 World after world shall fall at my right hand ;
 The glorious future be the passed despised :
 All now that seemeth bright will soon seem dim,
 And darker grow, like earth, as we approach it ;
 While I shall stand upon yon heaven which now
 Hangs over me. If aught can make me seek
 Other to be than that lost soul I fear me,
 It is that thou lovest me. Heaven were not heaven
 Without thee.

LUCIFER. I am here now. Art thou ready ?
 Let us go.

ANGELA. Well—farewell. It makes me grieve
To bid a loved one back to yon false world ;
To give up even a mortal unto death.
Thou wilt forget me soon, or seek to do.

FESTUS. When I forget that the stars shine in air ;
When I forget that beauty is in stars ;
When I forget that love with beauty is ;
Will I forget thee : till then, all things else.
Thy love to me was perfect from the first,
Even as the rainbow in its native skies :
It did not grow ; let meaner things mature.

ANGELA. The rainbow dies in heaven and not on earth ;
But love can never die : from world to world,
Up the high wheel of heaven, it lives for aye.
Remember that I wait thee, hoping here.
Life is the brief disunion of that nature
Which hath been one and same in heaven ere now,
And shall be yet again, renewed by death.
Come to me, when thou diest !

FESTUS. I will, I will,

ANGELA. Then, in each other's arms, we will waft through space,
Spirit in spirit, one ; or, grateful, dwell
Among these immortal groves ; watching new worlds,
As, like the great thoughts of a Maker-mind,
They are rounded out of chaos : will be oft,
On earth with those we have left and love, and help them ;
For God hath made it lawful for good souls
To make souls good ; and saints, to help the saintly.
That thou right soon mayst fold unto thy heart
The blissful consciousness of separate
Oneness with God, in whom alone the saved
Are holy and deathless, shall become, for thee,
My earliest, earnest, and most constant prayer.
Oh ! what is dear to creatures of the earth ?
Life, love, light, liberty ? But dearer far
Than all, and oh ! an universe more divine,
The gift, God crowns his chosen with, of heaven's
Unimageable glory, ere all worlds,
And after all reserved for those he loves.
As when the eye first views some Andean chain
Of shadowy rolling cloud-crag, air-based, height
On height, in sunny snowsheen, up the skies
'Spiring, like angels' pinions, when heaven's host
Self-hushed, God's utterance listens, nor can tell
Which loftiest, nor which loveliest, be ; as when
An army awakening with the sun, all hope,
Starts to its feet, spear answering spear, line, line
Reundulative ; white plumes, like war-foam, wave
Far round ; the light of sword-born lightning gleams
Generously ; while reek themselves away, unwatched,
Night's watchfires dull : so feels the spirit when first
Doubt quelled, faith's conquering arms flash certainty

On reason's field ; so, too, when now the soul,
 God's bright and mountainous mysteries receives,
 Containing heaven ; moving themselves towards us.
 In their free greatness, as, by ships at sea,
 Come icebergs, imminently upon their base
 Heaving, poised ; pure and pointed as a star,
 Afar off glittering, of invisible depth,
 And in the light above, dissolving.

FESTUS.

Dear one !

My prayer shall be, that thy prayer be fulfilled.
 And now, to earth again. Farewell, sweet soul.

ANGELA. Farewell. I will be oft with thee if maybe.
 But if, as fate may order, me thou meet'st
 Elsewhere than here, demand of me no word,
 But imitative of virtues not yet thine,
 Thou shalt learn sometime, why, where silence is
 Worthless ; and reticence only hath wise praise.

LUCIFER. Earth like I more than this : I rather love
 A splendid failing than a petty good ;
 Even as the lightning's bolt, whose course is downwards,
 Is nobler still than any fire which soars.
 I scarce can say wherefore I had thee hither,
 It was wrong, I fear.

FESTUS.

Mayhap 'twas destiny,
 Life's special charm.

LUCIFER.

Go to—reasons are plenty,
 Nor ever absent, but when wanted. Come !

FESTUS. I am determined to be good again.
 Again ? When was I otherwise than ill ?
 Doth not sin pour from my soul like dew from earth,
 And, vapouring up before the face of God,
 Congregate there, in clouds, between heaven and me ?
 What wonder that I lack delight of life ?
 For it is thus—when amid the world's delights,
 How warm soe'er we feel a moment among them—
 We find ourselves, when the hot blast hath blown,
 Prostrate, and weak, and wretched, even as I am.

LUCIFER. I have done nothing for thee yet. Thou heaven
 Shalt see, and hell, and all the sights of space,
 Whene'er thou choosest.

FESTUS.

Not then now.

LUCIFER.

Up ! rise !

FESTUS. No ; I'll be good ; and will see none of them.

LUCIFER. Remember, there's the moon.

FESTUS.

My memory
 Is most tenacious of the things of light,
 And the commands of love.

LUCIFER.

Oh, happy thought !

XVII.

Charged by the spirit e'er upwards ripening, man
 And evil, his mightier minister, invade
 Peaceful, that sacred sphere, the queen of heaven,
 Whose passive utterances of light reveal
 The birth of things, their subjectness to soul,
 Spiritual and human; sin's source, and the means
 Whereby perfection reattained, and men
 And angels joined in bliss with God, all good
 Shall be at full; and Time, his crown resigned
 After his day's reign, to Eternity,—
 Mother of him, and of ages all, cease. Here,
 Inspired by love of soul-life progressive,
 Though for a season thwarted the daring spirit
 Promise exacts unforfeitable, from one
 Who can fulfil vow made to test the skies
 Perfective, elevative of life.

The Moon.

FESTUS, LUCIFER, and LUNIEL.

FESTUS. Thus far along these silent wastes of light
 Have we, unseeing and unseen, held on.
 Time's sands seem turned to seed-pearl as they glide,
 In luminous slumber, through his shadowy glass,
 To glorified repose; while snowy Peace
 Hushes the infant soul, here born again,
 To wonder and delight. And yet these rocks,
 Whose flames once flourished in the face of heaven,
 Like burning banners o'er a fiend host, there
 Arrested in ignition, fire made stone,
 Speak out of other state than quiet once.
 Not Chaos when in travail of the earth,
 And groaning with the birth-pang, nor the sun's
 Deserts of fire, sea-deep with drifting flame;
 Nor all contortions of the solemn clouds,
 Can match the immarbled madness of this orb:
 As though some vast wild passionate soul, ablaze
 Through all its nature with volcanic sin,
 By God's one word translated into light,
 And the pure beauty of celestial peace,
 With adamant silence seized, had come
 That instant changeless, deathless and divine.
 Still meet we not what in this sphere we seek.
 Methinks my mission here may fail, and might,
 Were not my soul by force of faith in her
 Assured, who urged our hither steps, mine most
 Investigative, as like to light on truth
 Here hidden; and though long baffled, as to me
 Seems, who from sea-bed dry to hill-top have sought
 Vainly, the angel virtue of this orb,
 Still trust I to behold her, not as yet
 Rightly, perhaps, invoked. Or shall I call

Her aid, who willed us here ?

LUCIFER.

And if I knew not
To an ace our whereabouts, though groping, now
And then, through manifold darkness, as we have done ;
And of our failures, quite enough ! I, too,
Might deem this changeful spherelet just the spot,—
It is bounded, west by light, and east by night,
And north and south by nothing and the wind,
For all poetic possibles, and believe
Truth captured, might romance to us all the night,
Two se'nnights long, in allegories. At last !

FESTUS. Lo now the angel, as foretold. She makes
Hither. O beauty, holy and divine,
Life-eyed, soul-crowned, illuminated with truth.
Mark how unearthly fair and pure ; her air
Of sad felicity, and her mingled mien
Of innocent life and knowledge absolute.

LUCIFER. Ere Time had whet his infant scythe, or left
His cradling clouds, or yon pale watery star,
Heaven's giant tear, first cast its shade o'er space,
That angel knew I well ; but now, no more.
Nor wished I here to meet, nor thou with her.

FESTUS. Mind's silent invocacy hath oft such end.

LUNIEL. Earth-child, behold the angel of this orb.
Long have I marked thy wonder at these scenes,
Thy search for me ; this ceased, that satiate now.
Much of the passed thou 'mindst me, and the race
These hills and plains, once populous, teemed with, thee
Not wholly like ; of purer strain than thine,
Aërial more, meseems ; for virtue, hence,
Translate, entire to heaven. I, thus, charge-freed,
Rejoice to bid thee welcome, from what orb
So e'er thou hailest, the sun, which, day by day,
All forces of the world converts to light,
Exhaustless, and the hoards he spends, renews ;
Or further star ; thrice welcome ; whencesoe'er,
Welcome ! What tidings bringst thou ? say, art thou
The earnest of the line to come, foretold
By skiey spirits and friendliest, as once more
Soul-wise, to people these silvery solitudes
Of light, whose advent I these ages wait ?

FESTUS. O holy and divine one. I am man,
And not the hero of the destined race
Thou hopest ; not here inducted ; yet allowed
Latewhile, by leave divine, I, touching thus
At yon bright wanderer of the sun's broad realm
Stern king and lawgiver of stars the sphere
Hesperian, like thyself of crescent brow,
Nigher the sun one grade than we, where now
Aspirant of heaven, a spirit blessed of God,
A sweet and sacred sister of my soul,
Sojourns ; and, tending thence, towards earth mine own,

Am by her hither bidden, that I might learn
 From thee, lone watcher of the skies, and sole
 Mediatress 'tween the sun and earth, the fates
 Spiritual to be fulfilled of those we love,
 And mighty-minded man. And such we hold
 Thy sanctity of nature, thine unweighed
 Largesse of light intelligible, and calm
 Control of ill, thou wilt for me unseal
 The fountain of the future, and charm forth
 Wave after wave of wonder.

LUNIEL. Thou, too, who ?

LUCIFER. Master and servant am I here of him ;
 Thine equal, more and less. But come not I
 Inquiring or desiring aught of thee.
 The future is to me mere nothingness ;
 The passed but as a dream ; the present is
 My portion ; therein only do I live.
 Among these soulless solitudes, in sooth,
 Seems little call for me. But here I am.

LUNIEL. Oh well, I ween, do we each other know ;
 For all things, soul or spirit, here show clear.
 Within the radiant region of this orb,
 As light transpicuous, neither mist nor cloud
 The unconditioned vision dims ; and thou,
 Tempter of life, to me art thoroughly known.
 I know thee as the evil spirit of time.
 But mystery is there in thine origin,
 Thy ministry, thy fall, which, none create,
 Not even thou thyself canst fathom. God
 Only can read what he hath written there
 In hieroglyphic darkness, and he will ;
 That his great works may know themselves and him,
 Ere all the ages end. From God I own
 Power to foretell what only he foreknows ;
 And ye are both predestined beings. Such
 His pleasurable will, that they who serve
 Rule with him ; who obey not, serve him still.

LUCIFER. It is even so ; thou sayest truth.

FESTUS.

Thy words,

More precious to mine ear than seaborne pearls,
 Pierce me with light. Speak on, pray.

LUNIEL.

Mortal, know

Our spirits are the keys to all we see ;
 And whoso, first permitted and inspired
 Of heaven, but pondereth well the page of life
 Before him, shall unlock at last the store
 Hid in it and all others. To predict
 The coming it is needfullest to con
 The passed and present. As to things of time,
 Time is divisional ; eternity
 All unitive. Perfection is to come.
 I thus the mutual destinies have learned

Of thine orb and mine own.

FESTUS. Inform me, then,
O holy and divine one ! who now tread,
On this sole purpose bent, these shores of light,
Silently shining, by thy spirit graced,
The god-state of the future.

LUNIEL. Be it so
Attend ye ; for ye witnesses are both
To wisdom, of her world-comprising plan.
One is the end and origin of all.
God, from the first, was solely in himself ;
Nor aught was in existence, God except :
Nor time, nor world, life, flesh, sense, soul, nor sin,
Nay, there was no negation ; God sole all.
But willing to create, his hands he spread
From east to west, and constituted space ;
From north to south he planned the boundless map,
And consecrated it. The universe
Is but a state of being, and a life
And time condition of the will divine ;
A veil whose web is light embossed with stars ;
Through which the eternal essence kindly deigns
To manifest itself ; and all he makes,
As buds and tender branches bourgeoning,
From Being's sacred stem, making to bless.
Deep in the universal centre of things,
Infixed the Infinite, for gods God made,
Therefore, the heavens ; and dark æthereal space,
For the immortal angels, love sustained,
Which occupy with him eternity,
And sin not, err not, doubt not. Next he made,
By might omnific and deific love,
Matter, for beings of a nature mixed,
Whose forms should be material, blessed with life,
Vegetive, fleshly ; these instinctive, those
Unconscious ; and for these and him to come,
With starry globes innumerable, suns,
Planets, and moons, and meteors, circumvolved
Each round the other, round their central sun,
In countless clouds and firmamental wholes,
Whose orbits scarce demean infinitude,
Did he the void impeople ; he the suns
Of self-genetic, space-creating light,
As types and tokens of his heavenly love
And beatific power, with spirits vast
And world ordained intelligences, fined
From all creation, through its thousand grades,
For man, the mighty earth, and all the orbs
Revolving round the middle thrones of fire,
Compacted of the elements, wherein
Dwell separately all less perfect souls ;
For him the moon, reflective, ministrant,

Of all he chose one system as a law,
 The great ensample of his starry scheme,
 One sun, one earth, one moon, one race, one tribe,
 He rules by choice the universal whole.
 All that are angels, therefore, held, or gods,
 And worshipped by the ignorant soul, are man ;
 Man, self-inclusive of all lower forms,
 All higher natures less than the Most High,
 For angelhood and manhood (doubly branched
 Offspring of Deity) each one glorified
 By freest choice of good o'er ill, and life
 In consonance with His universal law,
 Is homed and heavened within the embrace of God.
 The final sum that science crowns her with,
 This ; between God and nature, man alone ;
 However various his conditions be,
 Through space's universal round, and all
 The countless orbs of viewless skies, exists ;
 Nature's essential summit he and God's
 Deific incarnation : this weigh well ;
 For spirit is refracted in the flesh,
 And shows as crooked what is straightness' self.
 Call all not God nor nature, man ; nor fiend
 Nor angel but his kin ; God, thus, the world,
 And man, are all : man midst, the third great form,
 Wherein unite the two divine extremes,
 In vital essence. Partly viewed, to each
 His double nature is allied ; conjoined
 They embrace themselves in him, compact effect
 Of God and the lone universe ; he the mean
 Immortal, vital, of all things, brute life,
 And heaven's divine eternity. In man
 Do God and nature reconcile themselves ;
 God's image he, and the world's. In mental kind,
 In moral and spiritual his sire's ; in frame,
 This elemental and transitional shape,
 His mighty mother Nature's favourite son.
 Soul, quintessential element, unto her
 Heaven's love-gift he alone heirs of her fruit ;
 She, perfected in him most ; of her line,
 Head-glory. As man the quality of all life
 Thus shares above, below, and matter inert,
 So, in his nature sanctified, all things back
 To their final origin return, in round
 Totality of life. For our dear sakes,
 Life mortal is exalt to life eterne,
 And God with justest love still saves from death,
 To heaven's divinest destinies, the son
 Of his eternal bridals.

FESTUS. Whence are we !

LUNIEL. Child of the royal blood of man redeemed,
 The starry strain of spirit elect, create

Before all worlds, all ages, thence we are.
 This, therefore, be thy future and thy fate.
 As water putrefied and purified,
 Seven times by turns, will never more corrupt ;
 So thou and thine whole race, all change endured,
 Through doubt, sin, knowledge, faith, love, power, and bliss,
 Shall practise every note of Being's scale,
 Till the whole orble harmonized with heaven,
 Peace, pure imperial peace, rule all below ;
 Till, star by star, these bright and sacred seats,
 Whose ancestry of sempiternal suns
 Comes of the vast and universal void,
 And in whose lineage of light yon earth
 Seems but a new possession, scarcely worth
 Accepting or rejecting, shall at last
 Into primordial nothingness relapse ;
 And man, the universal son of God,
 Who occupied in time those starry spheres,
 Regenerate and redeemed shall live for aye,
 Made one with deity ; all evil gone,
 Dispersed as by a thunderclap of light.

LUCIFER. Spirit serene ! Hath evil no effect ?

LUNIEL. Timeous it hath, being the shadow of good.
 With man all good hath evil, or may have ;
 Evil, of soul test, it seems good to God
 To bear with, pending time ; for how, unless
 Contingent, were free choice ? Thus may with God
 Evil itself prove possible good.

FESTUS.

And sin ?

LUNIEL. Evil and sin are twin with time and man.
 Sin from a selfish, sensual, source sprung, seeks
 An individual end ; whereby we stand
 Opposing deity, and the great commonwealth
 Of worldly life ; sin voluntary evil ;
 But good, wherein with God we concentrate,
 Though bound on Being's very utmost verge,
 Unites us with the infinite, and rules
 Right through us, as a radius of the law
 Eternal of intelligence which bounds,
 Quickens, upholds, and rectifies all things.
 Sin is the birth of evil ; hell, of sin ;
 Destruction of corruption forms the end.
 Heat is not in the sun, nor wrath in God,
 Who, though our faith may waver, still is love.
 Sense of his terrible justice makes it wrath
 To soul that sins : He judging, always mild.
 'Tis the eye twinkles, not the star. When him
 We spurn we suffer : suffer and inflict,
 On him our suffering, gracious he, all time.
 Revenge, wrath, judgment, all are names of love
 The crowned effect of being, and therein
 Result. Such retribution is our God's :

Such glorious retribution as the sun
 Inflicts on fogs and shadows. Hell is part
 Of nature. Human retribution stands
 Divine in ordination ; but divine
 Judgment on human souls by torturing fires,
 In everlasting blast, a blind reproach
 To the pure God, who blesseth all he makes.

LUCIFER. Destruction I believe in. Mercy may
 What it once made, unmake ; scarce re-create
 Into its opposite. Between man and man
 Justice is sacred, and 'tween man and God,
 Whose equity all embraces, mercy is sure.
 But between God and fiend no middle power
 Exists, save man, and no creator he.

LUNIEL. Thee God ! all creatural nature more or less
 Denies ; but thou, above all contraries,
 All lovest, all affirmest, as of thee.

FESTUS. As when two clouds, such differences delight,
 By controvertive currents blown of air,
 Each other's path cross, vast in seeming grace,
 As knowing heaven both ample and apt enough
 Even opposites to tolerate ; each to me
 Truth's footsteps seems to track. From both I learn,
 Scanning the depths of Deity, what fate
 Inexplicable judgment first pronounced,
 By arbitrary rule, in reason's light
 Shows righteous, shows humane, shows worthy God.
 Yea even here as everywhere, let man
 Worship his Recreator, and the world's,
 Made perfect blissward, by preparative fire.
 In this aspect or that, life nourishing, life
 Refining, not of life destructive sole.
 O thou, who holdst the universe in thyself,
 Not only as we may mentally, but in act ;
 Cause uncontaminate by effect, all else
 Effect with cause creatively connexed ;
 Who in Being's inaccessible depths dost dwell
 Central, thence self-diffused through all ; whose course
 Through space uncomprehended, we but track
 By the evanishing star-dust of thy feet
 Left on heaven's roads ; from world nathless to world,
 From firmament to firmament can we trace
 Each soul his individual link with thee ;
 The pure invisible touch which makes us thine ;
 The something more substantial than the sun,
 More general than the void, yet nested here ;
 As through the æry silence of the soul,
 Swifter than eagle rushing upon the wind,
 Thou sweepst into possession, when thou wilt.
 So many are thy mercies, what is left
 Save this, to ask ? continue to us that
 Thou givest. To cease pertaineth not to thee.

The elements may all confusedly fail ;
 Systems, now burning, stiffen corselike ; or slide
 Into their graves of darkness and decay ;
 The sun at length exhausted in the strife
 For fiery aliment from the self-thinned air,
 With his æthereal victor, sleep, and die ;
 And firmaments conglobed them, till at last
 The universe in one orb concentrate, fit,
 Then, for thy footstool only. Change like this
 Ten thousand times may happen, until it fall
 To the observant spirits at thy right hand
 Noteless, by reoccurrence ; man, the while,
 Restored to the essential whence he came
 Consorting but with the infinite, nor knowing
 To utter what is not divine and true,
 Shall ripen in thy bosom, till he grow
 Through endless heavens, triumphant and serene,
 Into the thronèd god thou badst him be.

LUNIEL. Depart. Thou knowest all things, knowing this.
 The world is God's broad word, whose sense is heaven,
 To those who wisely read ; time's trilogy,
 The mighty drama of the Lord ; the rest
 Man, angels, act and hymn. To him devote
 Be all the paradisal world to come ;
 Each hill an altar named to God, where man
 Sainly, may pray and praise ; a covenant heap
 Of witnessed commune 'tween them ; oh, may earth
 Sea-like, but render back the heaven she nears ;
 Be every flower a censer of delight
 Spiritual ; each wing an augury of the skies.

FESTUS. A future this, to live for.

LUCIFER. I abhor
 The self-delusions men affect. With them
 The future is a god-king, born in heaven,
 Rich with hereditary royalties,
 And entail of interminable times.
 Morn's roseate breath, fresh blown o'er night's bright dew,
 Is foul before this urchin's, as a sough ;
 His hand is like the lily's fragrant snow ;
 And he is robed in weeds of whitest sheen ;
 Pet godling of the world ! The present, what ?
 A ragged, beggared dotard, sick to death
 Of the grey years, and round returning skies.
 But what's the truth ? Nor passed, nor future, is ;
 The present only is all time.

FESTUS. Too much
 Thou hast taught me, spirit, of the passed, to shun
 The surety 'tis in me, for good or ill ;
 And thou, too much, sweet angel, not to feel
 The hopes first planted in my mind by her
 Who bade me here, of commune blessed to come,
 Make henceforth life's best part, that I the more

Concede me to the future.

LUNIEL. Know, then, friend
Of her I love with thee, that limited though
In sphere, each spirit celestial, yet the extent
To all seems well nigh vergeless ; and if thou,
Prepared, wouldst ken what more of human fates,
Even of the individual spirits that star
Earth's passed, renowned ; and how the eternal years
Find them and leave ; or lapped in thought, as these,
Or fired to act, as those, perpetual, say !

FESTUS. Dear angel ! If through all these radiant spheres,
Thou show'st, so stimulant to the inquisitive mind,
Of dreams of miracles wrought, mayhap, by son,
Prophet, or saint of the Supreme ; not masked
In mean or stable state, but as a god,
Carrying his kingdom with him, and his court,
His converts, and his heaven ; that so, though plunged
In death's abyss, death passed, it is in his train's
Triumph, and the effluence of his conquering light,
They enter deity ; if, nay, trust me, e'er
Mine it might be, more proofs of God's just love
Than ever earth shows, to learn, such would I rather
In thy care tutelar, than 'neath other wing
Angelic, these mine eyes have yet beheld.

LUNIEL. God's are the ultimate ends of life ; but these,
Sun, planet, satellite, heaven's all-typèd spheres,
Of evervariant being, it is mine to search,
Sojourn in, pass through ; if abide in not.
Mean mundane these, and just remedial spheres,
Meedful, preliminary, where meet, death passed,
Men's spirits ; for whose can His pure eyelids, heaven's
Passive rebuke, sustain ? Such hovering search
Our possible privilege, leave being had, to enrich
The spirit with royal liberties but fulfilled
In thy kind, deathwise ; and thus the freed soul fit
For truth, orbèd perfectly in heaven alone ;
High thought and pure, it is mine to hallow aye,
And guide through heaven the meditative soul,
Slightful of luxuries. Let not world-life warp
Thy heart from its strain upwards. Shun, severe,
Seculsive, youth's frivolities and deceits.

LUCIFER. Oh yes, I'll help in all austerities.
There's nothing like extremes. The mean's too good.

FESTUS. Earth was my future once, but now 'tis heaven.

LUNIEL. Earth is the emerald tablet, by God's throne,
He writes his laws upon, and his open fates ;
That all the heavens his starry rede may learn,
Even to the end. Thither ye therefore hie.
Earth's angel waits thee next, estranged by woe
From all her kindred world-wardens, she weeps
The impending end of things, nor ceases haunt
Heaven with thrice deprecated prayer. Farewell.

LUCIFER. Come then, since earth and heaven have willed it thus,
 Let us fare forth ; our mutual destinies
 Coeval, and concurrent with the world.
 This life thou findest not, say, a thought too grave ?
 Who seeks creation's mysteries ;—well, a change,
 Now and again, seems reasonable, I own.

FESTUS. How can the aspiring spirit, whose faith is sure,
 Whose aims, experiences like these, converse
 With pure intelligence, and advance in paths
 Heavenward, divine, prove reach their mark, e'er change
 Its end, and change for meaner ?

LUCIFER. Pleasure, love,
 And mirth, ye graces three, make up for this,
 Right soon, or something will, I fear, go wrong.
 We want some merry chirrupping friends, that's clear.
 There is one I have marked in secret for some time,
 Of that inamorate triad once I met,
 Following a bridelike funeral, if not vowed
 Wholly to mirth, yet one who for a while
 Might brighten up his path, and aid such aims
 As mine be ; nor much miss the mark. But wait.
 A sunny pool 'mid life's brief stream, I seem
 To see, where glides, scarce sensible of the flow,
 Youth's gilded shallop calmed 'mong lilies ; seem
 To catch a song ; quaff wine.

FESTUS.

What sayst ?

LUCIFER. I say,
 Me unconditioned being charms not ; nor things
 Certain ; contingencies are enough for me ;
 And serve me passing well.

FESTUS. Farewell, sweet orb.
 Earth draws us like a lodestone. See, we are coming.

XVIII.

Say not of God, as infinite, we nought know;
 For His essential, rayed through attributes
 Adding not to, nor borrowing from, the whole,
 Like to some beamy crystal which in light
 Self-emanative, imparadised, all round
 Yields many and mighty facets, than man's eye
 Each vastier; this as not from that distinct;
 But as our self-delimiting vision seeks
 Ends such, or such aids; justice, mercy, love,
 Like powers, one variant perfect, one divine
 Substantive; us illuminant as with act
 And proof reflex of one same moral law,
 Operant through every grade of spiritual life;
 As gravity, of a like material scope
 Through all creation, shews; but know, our thought,
 If incapacious of the unbounded mind;
 And a mere match for time and space, things made
 Of like span with our fellow world; yet not
 Inapprehensible wholly, even of God,
 As out of these His vast perfections flow
 To limited spirit however potent, pure
 Or fallen, the moral law of every sphere;
 All angel tribes; human; fallible all,
 All even though fallen perfectible; back to Him,
 In self-redemption voluntary, and heart
 Obedient, to the law of penitence, called.

Cloudland. FESTUS, LUCIFER, after ANGEL OF EARTH. *Clouds
 and Mountains seen—Sunset.*

FESTUS. We are nearing, I perceive the earth. Less clear
 This region respirable than midmost space
 We late have transited. And nigher now
 The cumulous waves of vapour which o'erhang
 The heads of mortals heave in view. Behold
 Yonder earth's angel guardian, pensive sad
 Below eve's gold-fringed cloudlet, faithful e'er
 To her spherul charge. She marks, and seems to await,
 Our coming.

LUCIFER. Go! accost her.

FESTUS. Angel guide,
 For such I feel I err not, naming thee,
 Of this fair orb, my natal star, while thus
 Eying this harp still resonant; and these tears,
 Sad witness of a heart with grief o'erflowed,
 Say what thou friendly meditatest, and how,
 If any wise, he who speaks now, may thy soul
 One sigh's weight lighten; or how likewise aid
 One wish thou wouldst see fulfilled, I, and my peer.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Both know I: him as cause of world-wide woe,
 And thee, as earth's last hope, and mine, so view
 Thy kindly promise given unasked, to aid
 In aught I had at heart, strong trust in me,
 So waked, that this decree for earth's surcease,
 Which crushes down the essential in my soul

Of deathless life may be, since God is known
 In Heaven, as answer prompt of prayer, for *aye*
 Cancelled, should man and angel both beseech.
 Let us then both to Heaven. 'Twas but even now,
 So fruitful is my memory of sad things,
 Which always first are found, if turned at last,
 And mellowed to a happier end, I mused
 On what had once befallen in ages gone
 A sister sphere, (was nought more sad to see
 In all God's world) and wept, as thou beheld'st,
 O'er the remembered woe; till later thought
 Like to a sunset gleam that lightens up
 Creation with a prophet's glance, assuaged
 My spirit, suggestive of a morrow's joy
 Divine, the effect of prayer accorded.

FESTUS.

Speak,

Angel revered! thy story I would learn,
 Be it of grief or gladness; to thy mind
 Recalled, it may be, for some holy end
 Heaven would through us, work out.

ANGEL OF EARTH.

Wouldst thou then now.

Elect to hear, and he thy foe-like friend,
 He, primal culprit of the first, and now
 Mask'd instigator of evil in this last;
 Albeit too wary oft to show himself
 Among the wrecks he hath wrought; if he, soul-steeled,
 Can hear the shame of passed deceit revived
 And told, not I will shrink the auspicious task.

LUCIFER. I will bear with all I can. If smote too sore
 Why, I'll go hunt with Nimrod, or the moon,
 Orion's shootress; pitiless punisher
 Of misdemeanant giants; she who joys
 To chase the clouds brute-shaped, that with her light
 But threatened, scud, nor wait the maddening dart.

ANGEL OF EARTH. And if to know how various, sudden, slow,
 Or ceaseless, are the courses God elects
 To conquer evil; slowly erasing, now
 Its fatal features, line by line; and now,
 By one annihilant word, destroying it,
 For aye; how amiably redemption fills
 With souls reclaimed the bosom of our God
 In countless wise; in every separate sphere
 Thou, mortal, wilt at least rejoice to learn
 The triumphs of eternal good; and thou
 Immortal, be forewarned to dread just dooms.

FESTUS. O holy angel, warden of the world,
 Who guidedst its first footsteps o'er the paths,
 Untried, of newest space, well plodded now,
 Which round the sun it circleth, do thou speak
 Who sweetliest can; whose long experience tends
 Far past the immediate parentage of Time,
 Into ages precreate, what may thou deem'st,

To man, through me, God blessed instruction prove,
 And wisdom of the Heavens ; these, gate and goal
 Of that true life the inviolate purity
 Of yonder sky but shadows. So that we,
 Like self-obedient elements which contain
 Their total laws, and partial liberties,
 God's rule may trace more readily in all spheres,
 And more condignly weigh.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Immortals, hear.

LUCIFER.

We wait.

ANGEL OF EARTH. In one of those pure, happy stars which claim
 Like peace with Heaven ; what time mine orb, yon earth,
 Weltering beneath her waste and watery shroud,
 And, judgment executed, all care, all cause
 All office lost, of lesser kind, like ours,
 Create, had forfeit paid ; one cell-like speck,
 Tilting the waves, unwhelmed, unhelmed, within
 Whose wood-bowed womb all life that globe could boast,
 Lay saved miraculously ; I, thus released
 From duties superseded ; to such sphere,
 Invisible oft to all but art-armed eye,
 Self relegate, had withdrawn to ponder fate
 And seek that clue of equity hidden of God
 In time's unravelling ball ; and there received
 Companionably, some lustres, not a few,
 Passed among saintliest friends ; with whom, one day,
 'Twas holy festival in Heaven ; the close
 Of time's divinest epoch, from of old
 Commemorate of soul's advent to the world ;
 Joy satisfied, a feast of souls devout,
 Serenely celebrated by souls of Light,
 Spread through that happiest orb ; and, evening come,
 Was on the point to join the eternal passed ;
 Far round the infinite extremes of space,
 Star spake to star rejoicing, as each sped
 His splendid way, and a rekindling smile
 High on the countenance of Heaven's central sun
 Thrilled to the heart of nature ; while there rose
 Expressive of felicity pure and whole,
 A clear bright strain of music, like a braid
 Of silver round a maiden's raiment, all
 The sweet solemnity imbounding. There,
 Each lofty spirit luminous with delight,
 Sate these, of God's selectest angels ; here
 Sate others, in their grade less high ; but all
 Like humble spiritually ; of one bright seat
 I, transient tenant for that deathless hour
 Of the great year celestial ; gathered round
 The golden board of this palatial orb,
 In spherul order. All of fruitage known
 To their unvanishing Eden, and the land
 Of everlasting light, to please the sense,

And satisfy the soul, the tree of life
 In all its bright varieties could yield
 Was lavished ; and its fragrance filled the skies.
 The bright blue wine as though expressed from Heaven
 Glittering with life, went moonlike round and round,
 Times sacredly repeated, 'mong the gods
 And spirits who had earned, each one, his star,
 In that immortal conclave, as they held,
 Deep commune on the wondrous end imposed
 By the Eternal, Saviour of the world,
 Not less than Sovereign, Maker, and just Judge,
 Upon his infinite work ; and all the harps
 Intwined about with nectar-dropping flowers,
 Which wither not though culled, but on the brow
 Or mid the bosom, bloom as in their fields,
 Were trembling into silence, when there stepped,
 Unseen before (as some Diviner's rod
 Had smitten aside a viewless veil, and shown
 Him always there) into the joyous midst
 Of that bright throng, surprised in holy ease,
 A young and shining Angel. In his air
 Sat kingly sweetness, kind and calm command,
 Yet with long suffering, and a conscious wealth
 Of inexhaustible patience, yet to be
 To the utmost proved, imblended ; for the soil
 Of dust was on his garb and sandalled sole ;
 Dust on the locks of undulant gold which flowed
 From his fair forehead rippling round his neck ;
 Bedropped, defiled with cold and cavelike dew,
 One hand a staff sustained of greenest growth,
 As 'twere a sapling of the tree of life ;
 And one smoothed in his breast, a radiant dove,
 Fluttering its wings in lightnings rainbow-hued,
 The sole companion of his pilgrimage.
 Silent he stood and gazed. The angels straight
 Rose from their pearly seats, inwreathed with gems
 And priceless azurine from the morning's mine,
 And bowed the head, and stretched the hand ere yet
 One welcoming word were uttered. Wine and bread,
 Bread made of golden wheat, and wine of life,
 Such only as immortal Virtues use
 Before the guest were set ; and cool white robes,
 The angels gave him, floating halo-like
 With fleecy glistening round his fainting limbs.
 Twain of the Thrones at once their seats resigned ;
 Ministrant Princedoms sang again the strain
 Which fills the halls of hospitable Heaven
 When that the holy enter, or the Sons
 Of Light hold high and hallowed festival.
 Then spake the cherub, chiefest of us all ;
 Bright Angel ! from whatever sphere arrived
 Supernal and celestial, or some orb

Far off, of starry nature ; for the toil,
Methinks, of travel weighed upon ye erst ;
While signs of mortal struggle, as to us
Seemed, graved thy brow, and bent a famished frame,
Now cheerily relieved ; instruct us, pray,
Who here assembled sit to celebrate,
By kind commission of our Lord, his love,
If we in aught thine ends can further aid,
Or, thine intents, good as those only thou,
We are sure, couldst plan, serve ; even as fain we would ;
For all we know is holy enters here,
By virtue of our King's set law ; and we
Prepared for sacred action, instant are.
Thus he, his seat resuming, while a glance
Of bland approval beamed from every eye,
Wise reticence still reining in each tongue.
Answered the stranger Angel rising slow
Sunlike, from out his seat of clouded gold ;
O kind, O noble natures ; well ye work
Your ministry of love, who thus pour forth,
Unmeasured, unconditioned, your divine
Riches of deed and word, that all who come
Whether by invitation, or by need
May of the Sovereign's bounty whom ye serve,
Like honour with his chosen friends receive ;
Accept these thanks, this blessing. As he ceased,
The air became all incense ; and the skies,
As though endowed with native sunlife, showered
Around on all their iridescent smiles.
Oh not to us, said I, in name of all,
Be gratitude for duty barely done ;
All honour is our Lord's. To him we owe
This gracious exaltation o'er the world
Wherein his love sustains us ; his, who first
By one omnipotent Fiat breathed us forth ;
Who, out of awful non-existence us
Translated into life, and turned our souls
To angel constellations, ranging free
Through all the eternal liberties of light.
But if thou wilt, say, oh most holy guest,
Whom we account us blessed to receive.
While yet the day doth solemnize the skies,
Wherefore thou hither comest ; how treated else
In other worlds, and whither now ; so we,
Haply may gather wisdom from thy words,
Or help afford by deeds. Then once again,
That radiant youth immortal as the morn,
Rose from the crown of Heaven, and bending low
Spake with a soft bright utterance, like the voice
Of very silence musing : so serene
His parlance ; all attent his audience round.
O happy angels, heavenly and divine,

To whom nor sin, nor sigh, nor tear, nor woe,
Not even in thought imaginary may come ;
And whose free lives in blessed obedience pass
To one law pure and sole, the law of love ;
How shall ye hear, or I relate, the griefs
Of orbs disrupted, and of spirits dyed
In blackest sin ; of God's high rule reject ;
His own deputed, exiled ; rudely thrust
From ancient throne, and old dynastic calm
Thought steadfast and eterne, and through the blank
Of lifeless night compelled to wander ; where
But that afar he caught the friendly glance
Of your extreme and most felicitous star,
He might perchance have ever strayed ; but since
A gracious ear to stranger's plaint be yours,
Let me, in briefest wise recount the events,
Mid worlds far distant, some few deeds of mine
Blent with, not wholly dimly, part concern :
That ye in joy thus fortified, may thanks
Give for your peaceful lot, and further bless
God, who hath put it in your hearts to share
Those bounties with the stranger, ye enjoy.
To Him be praise and worship in all worlds,
Passed even the ken of angels, in the midst
Of a bright ring of worlds, the central void
By luminous circlet compassed, which so hides
Its proper firmament ; with that flaming belt
Self cycling, moveable, of galactic suns
Tempering the outer infinite ; an orb
There is, ah me ! there was, an orb of light ;
Once all mine own. In Heaven, my Angel Sire,
Such blessed relations are, ye know, in Heaven,
Abode, and ruled in glory many a tribe
Elect, of choicest virtues ; Abiel he,
Sovereign of all intelligences, all spheres ;
Beniel, my name ; and sons are we all, of God.
This orb I, trusted with supremest powers,
Paternal love could lend, myself had framed ;
Myself with life endowed, all ordering ; all
Adorning ; only not creating ; that,
Asks the Omnipotent hand, and loveful life.
All life is sacred in its kind, to Heaven ;
And all things holy, beautiful, and good.
There angels, marking it enriched with gifts
Of marvellous virtue ; and observant souls,
From all spheres, dwelled as in the bosom of bliss.
Piety, innocence, peace, and joy made up
The sum of being. Worship was the air
They breathed, and lived by ; lowliest righteousness
The ground they trode, wrought, builded on. A land
It showed of fountains, flowers, and honeyed fruits ;
Of cool green umbrage, and incessant sun,

Temperate of light, exhilarant ; rainbows there,
In permanent splendour, spanned the skies, by cloud
Sternier than amber breath-dimmed, undeformed ;
Here clear blue streams singing and sparkling ran
The bloomy meads to fertilize ; there, some
With honey, nectar, manna, milk or wine,
Fit for angelic sustenance, slow flowed,
'Tween palaces and cities, midst of groves,
Like giant jewels, set in emerald rings ;
All-where, the bowery coverture of woods
Ancient and dense, laced with all tinted flowers ;
Peaceful sojourn, for shade or rest, of lamb,
Lion, ox, eagle, dove or serpent, goat
And snow-white hart ; each sacred animal
Cleansed from all evil quality, sin instilled,
Speaking one common tongue, and gathered oft
In wisest parley 'neath some hallowed tree,
Centring each mazy pleasance, intersect
With an invisible bound ; so sweet the force
Of nature, heavenly sanctioned : such the charm
Life paradisal and palatial opes
To the heirs of worlds and ages. All went well
Full many a sunny cycle ; and year by year
The souls of that blessed orblet ripening rose
Spirit-wise to perfection ; day by day
Grew spirithood to deathless angel-kind ;
Angelic nature to Divine estate ;
Gracious and happy emulance which of all
Should happiest be. Among that heavenly race
Abode two angel sisters, nymphs divine,
The daughters of the Lord of gods and men ;
Star-dowered ; inheritresses of heavenly light ;
Conspicuous 'midst their holy kin, though all
Of eminent virtue, moved the sisters, each
As in finite form a vision verified
Of the eternal beauty. Yet how unlike
Their nature and their loveliness ; in one
A soul of lofty clearness, like a night
Of stars, wherein the memory of the day
Seems trembling through the meditative air ;
In whose proud eye one fixed and ark-like thought
Held only sway ; that thought a mystery :
In one, a golden aspect like the dawn,
Beaming perennial in the heavenly east,
Of paly light ; she ever brightening looked
As with the boundless promise unfulfilled
Of some supreme perfection ; in her heart
That promise e'er predestinate, alway sure,
Her breast with joy suffusing ; and so wrought,
Her sigh seemed happier than her sister's smile ;
Yet patient she and humble. Of these twain
The elder my betrothèd was ; to me,

From antemundane ages, by my sire,
 As of like royal issue with myself,
 Of spirit divine reserved ; yet so disposed
 The triple inheritance stood of this bright orb,
 That ere the elder entered on her dower,
 The whole, well-nigh, the younger should a fair
 Domain, to her accruing, first enjoy :
 Of her own choosing, sacred to herself,
 Sequester ; so forefixed of old ; until,
 Some secular times accomplished, both should lapse
 Into mine own pretemporal, crowning, rights.
 Who shall gainsay the will supreme of God ?
 For both He loved right well ; but, for my sake,
 The first the best, with whom was most secured
 The bliss of all. The younger now had ruled
 Moonlike, in meekest wise, 'neath Truth's inspired
 Instruction, and divine faith's, many an age
 O'er her select dominion ; and delight
 Leapt up its highest, when the news, made known
 By Wisdom, their high governante, spread abroad,
 Of nuptials nearing celebration. Vast
 And rich in festive splendour, were commenced
 The sacred preparations ; every heart
 Impatient for the hour when dominant stars
 Immingling cogent rays, should, said the seers,
 Propitious prove for such world touching rites
 As gave the bride-queen of their angel race
 With me enthroned to sit, and with me rule.
 Deceptive predication ! Whence ? Ah me !
 For lo ! in lieu of orbs conjoined, eclipse,
 Black, and of both ! The very night, sky-scanned
 By thousand eyes for the expected sign,
 (So Fate, which none save God who uttered, known,
 Had ordered) suddenly a stranger star,
 Shaped swordlike, and self-wielded, as it seemed,
 Or by invisible hand brandished on high,
 Far off in space appeared, out dazzling swift
 All lesser, nearer, lights which nature showed.
 So rapidly from end to end it flew
 Of Heaven's horizon, even as though it scorned
 The quiet skies of that ecstatic sphere,
 That the third night gone its threatful place in air
 It left for the unknown infinite below.
 When to their wondering eyes the morrow morn
 A marvel mightier than the sworded star,
 I sole perceived the Evil One (disguised
 In æry outline hovering, high behind)
 Had there unsheathed in heaven, where late it flamed,
 Behold, was present. Bands of angels, whence
 Was known not, thronged the groves and palaces
 Which decked our paradisaal world, in air
 And aspect, fair yet foreign, and distinct

Their every action with a shining grace
 Which like a lodestar chained, unfelt, the eye ;
 And made their charmfulness, exceeding far
 The solemn beauty of the original tribes,
 Erstwhile so happy, fatal. For these first
 The heart divided, once entirely God's,
 Whole, and without a flaw ; first tuned their lyres
 To angel love alone, but half divine ;
 First taught to separate self from Deity ;
 Yet seemed they nought to teach, but rather fled
 All serious converse and instruction, soon
 Curtailing worship and prolonging rest ;
 As though true worship were not union high
 Repose inagitable of soul, and rest
 In him, the immutable good, of all that live.
 These after mingling, now as though by chance,
 Now choice, in holy celebrations, asked
 Their rank to name and order, made reply
 They were the youngest offspring of the Heavens,
 Children of bliss and knowledge, richly dowered
 With singular joys and rare immunities ;
 That they were spirits of freedom, and their suit
 And servage voluntary, whence only germed
 What small, if any, merit, they might claim ;
 As else, their gracious Lord, they said, were mocked
 With none save forced compliance ; that all good
 Sprang from the natural impulse of their souls
 And the proud pleasure of pure liberty ;
 Which claims, self-laudatory, and unawed power,
 Proved they the measure of the skies fulfilled,
 Held in duality with Him who made ;
 The complement of all extremes of light
 Begun, and closed ; of all celestial kind
 The essential flower ; that after them was nothing ;
 With them, perfection finished ;—which to preach
 Of their own selves, and teach the truths consigned
 To their sole hands, their only purpose there ;
 Wandering where'er to wander pleased them best.
 Like, but unequal, as the eye to heaven,
 Errors the shape of truths put on, as clouds
 The forms of isle and continent whence they sprang,
 Suspended in the skies. With such like words,
 So falsely seeming true, and ofttimes urged
 Were sundry led aside to question, doubt,
 Deny, at last cast off, the holy law
 Ordained of Deity which makes his love
 Sustaining spirit, with virtue straitly yoked
 The soul's true faith and motive of all just
 Practice ; true reason and cause of righteous life,
 Peace, bliss. To those who mocked the modest truth
 And knew but this or that extreme of thought,
 Free-will but signified the idolatry

Of selfish nature, as opposed to God ;
 Blown up with self-conceived deserts, and proud
 To prove its own an independent power,
 Held in like absolute estate with Heaven's.
 Vain, impious thought, begone, and cease for aye.
 So these, divine permission to myself
 Such secret straight entrusting, to what end
 Ye shall ere long be 'ware of, presently
 Seceded ; yet remained, on outward terms,
 As heretofore, with their unshaken kin.
 But oh ! the absolute excellence was no more.
 The plane of pure perfection broken through,
 It was as though some galaxy of stars
 Had sunken, and left a horrid rent in heaven ;
 A ragged flaw athwart the sapphirine floor ;
 A foul chaotic chasm. Still further spread
 As from some central and impulsive point,
 In ceaseless radiation, day and night,
 Fresh errors, and reiterate wrongs and jars.
 In vain I throned myself in judgment hall,
 Uttering decrees predestined as of yore ;
 In vain I walked among them, beckoning back
 Such as in false society had strayed ;
 In vain, I warned of evil ; showed them all
 How God's exterminating judgments fell
 Ever on sin, with woe to whom they came.
 The testimony came to all in vain.
 The disaffection spread. Oh ! still I weep,
 Recalling that declension, sad and wide.
 By frankness unsuspect, and free access
 Gained to the imperial nymph, the strangers next
 Base hints insinuate of self-seeking power
 Sowed widely against the holy guide and nurse,
 Celestial wisdom, 'neath whose bounteous care
 Had grown those angel sisters since their rise
 Starlike, responsive to God's will and word,
 In the arcanest heavens. Her soon alas !
 The wily wanderers whispered first away,
 From wonted inculcation of deep lore,
 And holy truths, as narrowing down the soul,
 And marring the free actions and intents
 Of the angelic pair ; to which mean charge
 The elder, not the wiser, won too well
 By much and false persuasion, at the last
 Gave in, nor rued till after ; so mistaught
 To gladden at lack of all, even mild, restraint,
 Upon the natural world commanding will.
 Not so the younger ; who with tears profuse
 Grieved at the doom of parting with her guide ;
 Severance from holy tutelage, and loss
 Of the words of love, inspiring and inspired,
 She might from one so sagely instructive reap

Through life to come, who from the first instilled
Into their souls the sacred elements
Of heavenly truth ; and gave them each to taste,
In prelibation of supremest bliss,
The perfect sum of knowledge. God, she taught,
Is truth most pure, and justice, good, and love ;
To all His creatures, infinitely made known
By these, and such like attributes, though to none
In essence wholly cognizable ; He more
Than all capacity of created mind,
Through all time strained were equal to conceive.
Yet all His virtues imitable, He, man
And angel, so to image Him designed,
As far as pure Humanity could, that all
In righteousness and holiness and peace
And purity, joy might compass, justly earned,
And happiest self-content. From His right hand
Necessitative, sprang all existence ; sprang,
All various forms and spheres of spatial life,
Innumerable as the atomies of the light,
Or as the sands Time's mighty year-glass holds,
Though it comprise all deserts ; nature's vast
And elemental limbs, of His great will
The organs ; He above all form, all bound,
All Being ; whose every act is free ; whose word
Is fate ; with whom alone, and with His will
Concurrent was there peace. The bliss of Being
Is to be loved of God, sole source and end
Of rational beauty, and the eternal joy
Life echoes faintliest from all orbs in sign
Recognizant of His will that all create,
Not selfishly, nor slavishly, but moved
Freely to compass universal good,
Shall His own aims promote ; ill, God's great way
Obstructing but for a time, diverting not ;
And good triumphant ultimately, the peace,
All-harmonizing, secure, which rules in Heaven,
Peace, victress of all war. So wisdom made
Her favourite wise of heart, and led the one
Beloved through all the virtuous spheres and homes
Of perfect pleasure to the chequered globes
Which spirits aspirant, or, to grosser ends
Of sin and error, prone, commingling haunt ;
And as the Sun, through gilded waters, massed
Vaporous, of the upper firmament climbs ; then steep,
Down to the lowliest nook of farthest space,
Where earth like clay upon the potter's wheel,
Spins, day and night, descends ; they passed, to where
The last of happy creatures, and the first
Of wretched beings, semi-mortal man,
Bides ; who, his clay though tempered with the flow
Fourfold of Paradisal wave, and warmed

With breath of Deity, yet so self-bedimmed
 Of soul-sight rests, that, duped by dullest seers,
 Who, with earth-pent vapours blown, and reek of time,
 Falsely oracular sit and agonize,
 Preaching perdition endless, though in Heaven
 The sunsmile of Salvation on God's face,
 To soul assurant of bliss ultimate, beam
 Unrecognized, unrecked of, undivined,
 He all his rise ignores and glorious end.
 Still, after all these wanderings, wotting well,
 One single soul more wondrous than all worlds
 Which mass the skies with miracles of light ;
 They joyaunce most and rapt contentment found
 Coolly triumphant, as the restful stars
 Shall shew in heaven when time's hot day is done,
 Each in their proper orb and common sphere ;
 To meditations on futurity most
 Devote, and scrutiny of both act and aim
 Self-writ, indelible, on the inner tome
 Each soul imbreasts ; one day to be collate
 With the pretemporal volume graven of God,
 In tablets adamantine, high in heaven
 Treasured, the true Originals of fate.
 The Elder Excellence, meanwhile, who longed
 For more, and mere autocracy, unchecked,
 Unled, unwarned, ruled with a random hand,
 And an occasional sovereignty, the all
 But full totality to herself assigned
 Of the allegiant myriads of her race.
 These loved her well, and willingly themselves
 Ascribed to her for ever ; for that she
 Gave them all freedom ; wherefore in return
 They were her slaves by gratitude ; and ripe
 Any desire to grant or scheme abet
 Which pleased herself, or those intent to please ;
 Counsel however sage, and precept fair
 Savouring of better will, or end than theirs,
 Were treason named ; and Wisdom's words, at last,
 Bewrayed by guile, into a net were wrought
 For her own shining feet ; alas, the day !
 Long was a pretext sought, and baffled oft ;
 But never failure followed ill intent :
 And base success still sealed each fatal plot :
 The hour of parting came, and Wisdom wrung
 Her high uplifted hands ; nor breathed, unless
 To her she loved, that youthful saint, farewell ;
 Which elsewhere given, were but a mock to make
 Of valediction. How could that she left
 By any chance fare well ? Yet still she stayed
 Lingerin around that once supremest sphere
 Where, with the angel sisters of her care,
 She was of Eld so happy. Oft she made

For flight ; but pausing, her reluctant wing
 Wheeled pityingly again ; and thus consumed
 Her last night there, till every star had waned
 Into the coming light ; then took her way
 Upon her own bright plumèd arms to Heaven.
 The vanishing flash of her æonian wing
 Long hoped by those insinuant tempters, oft
 In deep divan met, they triumphant, marked ;
 And toward the elder of the imperial twain
 Those regal nymphs, inheritors of heaven,
 Laden with crown and robe and sceptre, rushed
 Tumultuous ; and applausive, hailed her thus ;
 O lofty Angel fair, be thou our Queen ;
 Worthy the sole and unobstructive rule
 Of every sphere, and every spirit-race ;
 Heart-honoured, heaven-ordained, predestined heir
 Of the bright line of ages numberless.
 Since God creating atomies first began,
 And ended with the universal world,
 Thou hast beheld no equal, nay, no like.
 Thee only we acknowledge ; and for this
 Hold our arrival blessed. Empress, hail !
 Then she elate, and with pride-blinded soul,
 Culpably tolerant of blasphemous praise,
 The towering seat prepared for her assumed,
 And sat a sceptred traitress ; by that act
 Her sister's previous right not only balked,
 And mine succedent challenged, but of all
 The promised privileges devised to accrue,
 On my accession, to the race, the loss
 Inexorably involved. Far, now, and wide,
 The tidings flew that I and all my rule
 Were virtually annulled ; abolished ; left
 Exsiccate even of hope. The judgment seat
 I sat, and none attended ; or but came
 With false, fictitious cause, to scoff and jeer.
 Then came an edict of perpetual ban
 And forcible exile 'gainst myself, and all
 Who dared the fallen fortunes to support,
 Or but to name as lawful. Thus the sword,
 Whose fiery emblem glared at first in air,
 Reigned, and divided all things. Every gate
 Of every temple straight was closed ; and lo !
 Each high and heaven allusive dome was filled
 With hollow-sounding emptiness alone.
 Once, in the midst of their assembly high,
 Met to discuss mean only and secular things,
 Such as had ne'er before moved angel minds ;
 And in the palace hall, where erst were held
 Full courts of joy, sweet audiences of love ;
 Skilled plans and choice designs of future good,
 Told, put to proof, improved, or perfected ;

And messages and missions sent, of grace,
Or publicly received ; hall, temple, court,
Built of immarbled air, essential stone,
Transpicious, fictile, workable by thought ;
Once I essayed to speak, and hearing hoped ;
But ere a word, they bound me by the hands
And drave me out with curses, taunts and gibes
Passing, thus manacled, the new-made throne
Where sat the crownèd traitress, of her crime
Conscious, and trembling mid the array of state
That girt her in brightly, I spake ; but not
In anger nor revenge ; for I foresaw
The wretched end of all such mortal sin,
And knew Heaven's holy purposes alone,
Eternal and substantial, stand for good :
Behold me thus ; I quit thee ; 'tis thy will.
Me thou forswear'st, who had loved thee more
Than all the tribes of angels, love thee still,
Despite the evil flatteries now thy soul
Is darkened with, degraded. Know me true.
The hour will come when thou shalt hold me yet
Dearer, than now detested. But 'tis thou
Shalt change ; not I. Watch ; for I come again.
She answered with a smile, a wretched smile
I could but pity her for ; but trembled, mute :
And I departed that dishallowed hall.
In this, too, God permitted them success,
And in far more that at the close he might
Their highest height o'ertop, and with the arms
Of love all conquering fling forth more supreme
His thrice victorious standard. Such his will ;
Such even in exile now, the due, the dear
Obedience of my heart ; for well I knew,
To change or re-create, with Him perdured
As facile as to make. The younger angel maid
Who dauntless kept her faith, and still with me
Held sad and sacred commune, though by stealth,
Was suffered to remain, close cloistered first,
In solitude religious, for that they
The empress' mind who swayed, dared not advise
To put her quite to death ; and that the tie,
And natural sympathy of sisterhood,
Sweet memory of the excellent times of old,
And flickering purposes for future years,
Which played about the heart of her enthroned,
Together, wrought to spare her and preserve.
Anon, though bidden to busy herself alone
With her own matters, and those mixed with them,
She, at convenient times, permission wrung
To walk abroad and tend her charities ;
But only in the humblest, homeliest guise.
And, as the Queen had shrunk not to abjure

Love passed, love present, and all future love
 Between her and myself, her whilome Lord,
 The younger, in derision, they who mocked
 Both, called the bride expectant, and the spouse.
 Now, what a change came o'er that orb serene !
 Through all the day was revelry and mirth ;
 Nor respite knew the night, till no one recked
 Of natural order, or of dues divine.
 While the neglected damsel, at the gates
 Of her imperious sister, at whose beck
 All luxuries started into life and use,
 In servile garb, and oft with ashes crowned
 As in contempt, sate outcast and forlorn.
 O royal menial, O imperial thrall !
 Companion once of angels in their height,
 How lowly art thou fallen ; and yet how pure,
 Seen in the sin-consuming light of God ;
 How meek, how perfect, in true servitude.
 These contumelies and worse, unvexed, she bore,
 Unheeding, uncomplaining. Day by day,
 Her to impress with due sense of disgrace,
 Was she led in, before the obsequious crowd,
 In sackcloth clad, to make obeisance meet
 To the sisterly majesty, which she, at first,
 Abashed, for peace-sake, coldly made ; nor lacked
 All hope, some gold-grains Time might number still
 Among the barren sands he measured forth ;
 That wisdom yet might home with them again ;
 And her usurping sister, still beloved,
 Though for this deed condemned, her diadem
 Yield to its rightful lord, and heir. In this
 Hope she survived, nor wholly stood alone.
 While all, almost, in that strange change of rule
 And law agreed, a certain few there were
 Nathless, within whose hearts the echoes stayed
 Of those last words I uttered ; and these found
 Joy unconceived in trusting still they might
 In act be verified ; and oft, as best
 They could, they comforted the angel child.
 Daily and nightly, she upon her knees
 Besought God to rekindle, in the hot
 And blinding darkness of her heart who ruled,
 The lovelight of His presence ; and to quench
 Sin's ruins as lava torrent, trained and led
 With desolating prevision, through that once
 Fair gardened world, fertile of joy, by those
 Who first imported it with evil ends.
 At night, too, in the wilderness we met ;
 For what erewhile a pleasaunce showed, was now
 A drear and desert sphere ; and there from her,
 I, banished, learned what things and how befell ;
 Nor left she e'er without one asked for boon,

Despite the wrongs I suffered with herself,
Wrongs which too many loudly joyed to hear,
That I for all would pray and intercede.
There were who spared not breath to show, though One
Who knew her well knew better, that she strove
Her sister in my heart's love to supplant ;
And for that she herself kept faith, would bound
To herself all favour ; and so circumscribe,
Through infidelity forfeited of one,
The promise made to both, of highest bliss,
Which on their birth-day had to each been given,
And, writ in silvery phylacteries, strung
Around their brows ; by the younger openly,
Not proudly ; by the tyranness hid, as though
Ashamed of, or indifferent to, God's gifts.
So like, yet how diverse, those twins divine ;
The daughters of the Most High God. To each,
As creatural spirit was trial still decreed
That they might know to approve the power devolved
From Heaven, of perfect choice ; know good, know woe ;
The woe, to this, of saintliest innocence
Falsely traduced ; the purifying pain,
To that, of sin repented of, abjured,
Atoned for : though they knew not that all grief
Should vanish, and good only and pure joy
Soul sifted justifiably by times,
Encrown each other finally. In all orbs,
Are secret truths, known but to Him who laid
Their sure foundations, trembling though they stand
Upon the countless columns of the air.
By secret instigation thus the heart
Was poisoned, of the Angel Queen to shun
And doubt her innocent sister. Time by time
Such imputations cast failed not to work
Wrath in the royal breast ; but rarely now
Of former love, or possible future, touched.
Enough such proud presumption, as inferred
By slander's lying tongue, were whispered round ;
Thus visited. Within the central square,
Fronting the glittering palace, stood the throne
Which changed so much the aspect of that orb,
And which I told of first ; whereon each day
She, ministering blind justice, sat, absorbed
In love of her own empery ; rapt to hear
The adulation of her foreign train ;
To trifle with her sceptre as a toy,
And court the rainbow flashes, startling bright
Of the star-gemmed tiara ; to her eyes
Jewels well worth the satrapies of Heaven ;
Rich in all fancied virtues to attract
Good, or from evil fend ; the which same gems
She oft would deftly moralize, and prove

To the subservient glozers, round, how well
 Their comeliness became her ; how much stead
 The brow, the bosom where they dazzling lay ;
 Now gleaming forth defiant, now reposed
 In silent capabilities of light.
 There, in her radiant siege, that Angel Queen,
 (What time the sister, so abased as wont,
 Meekly came forth, in pale humility,
 Low bending like the crescent moon, when first
 Born of the golden calm the western sky
 Joys in prophetic, duly to perform
 Set reverence,) sat, and eyed askance ; then spake ;
 While o'er her head attendants from behind
 Pavonian canopy of azure held
 In manner of a sunshade, this to screen
 From that one's glory, which might else have smote
 Harmful ; " Fair seeming sisterling, is't that thou,
 In my default, aspirest to espouse
 The angel prince, my sometime lover-lord,
 He exiled, thou in bonds ? If so, content :
 Ye well befit each other ; and so far
 As merits make, are equal in my mind."
 Answered the younger ; " O ! affianced bride
 Of God's own issue, be, betwixt us twain,
 Nor struggle, nor misdoubt. They both malign
 Who sow the seeds of discord broad-cast here.
 We each have our fore-noted lot. Be mine
 The power, the privilege say, of servitude ;
 Be thine command. My faith can never change.
 But thou hast fallen from service, to a throne.
 Though he who ever loves, nor swerves from that
 His heart hath fixed on once, with me consort,
 It is but for a season ; and all our talk
 Is of thee always. Countless prayers are thine."
 " I too have my devotions, and serve God,
 Doubtless, although I worship not with thee,"
 Replied the elder ; bowing from her throne ;
 " We worship each our star ; but all in Heaven."
 " We may not worship but the Invisible,"
 Answered the younger, firm. " No matter, now,"
 Rejoined the angel monarch (smiling bright
 On her confederated beguilers, round,
 Who smoothly sanctioned every pearly word
 That beauteous and imperial rebel breathed),
 " My temple is my heart. My seat is fixed
 Here in the midst of friends ; and by this crown,
 Each gem a sacred talisman of power ;
 Or amulet protective from all harm,
 Wrought by the spirit of friendly elements,
 And wondrously endowed, I swear, and be
 The oath as death irrevocable, the dull
 Alliance, once for me designed, by me,

I shrink not to confess, desired, I now
Abjure for ever. Go, dear sister, meet
Our would-be friend, once more, this once for me ;
And let him know our fixed resolve ; nor Lord,
Nor living equal is, nor shall be, mine."
Incipient murmurs of applause ran round
The lustrous throng, when lo ! an omen strange.
While yet she spake, the jewels of her crown,
But now obtested, in the sight of all
Dropped, several, down ; a sadly splendid lapse,
Like meteor showers, autumnal, in earth's sky,
Whose fancied virtues, in her false esteem,
Were that which made her queenly ; down they fell,
And but enriched the dust. With deep dismay,
She eyed the empty sockets, and was still.
Shame-stricken, slowly slid from her away,
The parasitic court, which had supplied
That mockery of a crown. The younger, then,
Who at her sister's feet her seat still sought ;
" O sister ! O divine one, O most dear !
There is a jewel more than worth all these,
These, virtue's shining semblances ; nought else :
Wilt thou not seek it ? 'Tis for asking, thine.
A friend there is ; a lover ; one most true ;
Who would not thus desert thee, though it had been
Thyself, by judgment, hurled into the dust ;
But there he would have comforted thee." " No more,"
Said the haught Empress ; " I have cast my lot : "
Then hurried from her throne, and disappeared.
Next came the crime of crimes, with curses crowned,
Staggering precipitate. No lack was there
Of direful sign and portent ; chief was this ;
Each day grew murker ; for the light of truth.
Suns those serenest firmaments ; and all
The falsehoods each one uttered, lie by lie
Rolled into rings of darkness round their heads,
Till the conglomerate gloom obscured the day ;
And each one so infringed the other's view
That contact in collision ceased. And still,
With gathering shades the stranger spirits showed
Still seemlier, and like light outletting flowers,
Glowed in the lengthening eve ; and oft at night,
As the stars streamed their silvery radiance forth,
Their rosy bowers they trimmed ; and training low
The honeyed wreaths, heavy with odorous dew,
Warbled a vesper song, inviting mirth,
And amicablest converse in the shade.
There likewise, they averred, to serve their God ;
Whose living image dwelled, they said, among them ;
With natural worship and symbolic rites
Of souls regenerate ; there, would seek to impart
The esoteric truths which nature veiled,

Of the one triplicative essence ; there,
All cosmogonic and theurgic lore
Make free to ravished vision ; and for one
Prostration of the spirit duly made,
The sacred fire, and secrets of the stars.
Nightly, these boastful proffers were proclaimed,
And mysteries more enchanting still, with smiles
Hinting of happier revelations yet,
When those they loved were perfected in faith.
These smiles at first were answered but by smiles
Incredulous, dissident. And yet, see, said they,
(In impious invocation of that doom,
Concurring figure, which their criminous aim
Exactly covered, not long time postponed) ;
How the night lengthens we have brought with us ;
Permitted to this end, that out of night
And preternatural darkness such as this,
May spring that luminous vision we enjoy,
And in ourselves create, of things divine.
Partake ye with us. Thus they tempted on.
Wonder at last awoke desire. Among
The original race angelic was a sage
Of dominant lineage, for undated years
Prime Counsellor he of good, who oft had urged
Obedience to old law ; reproved who erred,
In listening to these promissory guests
One wasted atomic even of an hour,
And most deplored their advent. Him it seemed
Good to the Great One who all life controls,
And circumscribes all action, so to prove
His further ends superior, to permit
One heedless moment's converse with the spirit,
Chief of these voluntary visitants,
Who lay 'mid fragrant flowers reclined, as though
Dreaming ; all sense yet but half solved in sleep.
The radiant chaplet drooping, and the zone
Cerulean, featly tricked with semblant stars,
Unloosened for repose. Arise, he cried,
Sternly ; and work some good, while haply light
Shall last. And wherefore ? said the angel guest ;
In wise and happy idlesse, half divine,
Those live who how to spend their life know best.
Our life is contemplation ; our sole work
Is worship. 'Tis the weak who ceaseless act.
We mightiest are in rest. This eve return ;
And I will show thee that we worship here.
What more, in speech hath never been divulged ;
But whatso'er, his first reproof's bright edge
Seemed blunted, to the sage ; who went his way,
Wordless ; his heart a sudden storm of thought,
Assaulting. Day, in musing passed and prayer,
Repeated, but not satisfied, At night,

When all the stars burned brightest, and the bowers
 Of song were silent, he in stealth returned ;
 And lo ! the spirit slumbering as before.
 O sweet and soft salute of sacred sleep,
 The starry eyes and lightning lids of earth
 And evening slowly sealing, and the cheek
 Of angel painting with a pearlier calm,
 How wert thou mockèd then ! Morn came, and he
 Returned not, poor apostate. Soul by soul
 Who went to seek him, stayed ; so strong the spell
 One dread defection cast. In every bower
 But that wherein he was, 'twas said he hid ;
 And soon each flowery canopy one concealed,
 Of self-idolaters sought, but never found.
 Pity them now, ye angels ; for like you
 Equal, almost, in favour of their Lord,
 Were once those lapsed ones. These are heart-wrung tears.
 At these words sympathetic tears swam o'er
 For the first time, from each celestial eye,
 As trees autumnal shed their leafy griefs
 In golden showers, shaken by sudden gust ;
 Tears not to be forbid ; tears, too, I see,
 Which, mortal ! cloud thine eyes.

LUCIFER. Let us depart.

FESTUS. What, now so sensitive !

LUCIFER. List, earth is calling.

The voice of her enchantments fills the sky ;
 The fragrance of her young and innocent breath ;
 The odours of her bosom, banked with flowers,
 As with the o'ermuch perfume of lilies closed
 And clustered in scant room, quite conquer me.
 There's more attraction in them than this tale
 Of ruinous success, soon to my disgust
 Re-righted. But no matter. Let us hence.

ANGEL OF EARTH. What urged thee, Lord of ill, this ill to wreak ?

LUCIFER. Was't not enough for me, that passing by
 An orb, not bulkier much than thine, and seeing
 The confident, reckless, virtue of all soul,
 I should have risked its ruin ; risked, and won,
 For a time at least. Eternity's not mine.
 I brook no more.

FESTUS. So, angel, part we now.

ANGEL OF EARTH. If this must be, enough. When next we meet
 Thou, child of earth, shalt cease to mourn, those tears
 Attesting pity for lost gods ; and both
 Make glad in the holy and unlooked for end,
 The good event, the joyful issue vouched
 To fervent prayer, of our late told of star
 So suddenly unblessed ; whose final fate
 Recorded, beams the one conciliant ray
 To me, of Being.

FESTUS. May we meet then, soon.

For much I long, though now frustrate, to learn,
So much as we may draw the future's veil,
The sequent state of angel world.

LUCIFER.

Away !

Earth's more to me than all earth's angel dreams.

FESTUS. 'Tis strange, 'tis beautiful but to meet with these
Sweet spirits as here abound, each personal soul
In form aerial, framed distinct, like wind
Passive, not senseless, but selfmoveable, fills
With rapturous hope my heart, and bids rejoice
That we like stationary stars may pause
Awhile upon our course.

GUARDIAN ANGEL.

Pause, and proceed.

XIX.

But dimmed,

Drowned, lost all this, like an eye in tears of mirth,
Like a star setting in a twinkling sea,
Mid revellings, song and dance, wild glee and wine,
Where beauty's orb rules, lady of the hour,
More astral than terrene, o'er lovelorn youth,
And damsels on whose lily necks the blue
Veins branch themselves in hidden luxury,
Hues of the heaven they seem to have vanished from.
By new loves lured, by life's sheer levities, swift
The tempted takes his leap, as cloud-lapped stream
Vaults o'er its crags, self-dissipative in air,
To end in watery dust without all end ;
Mere spells the spirit's eye to daze 'gainst needs
Of nobler being ; mock substitutes for aims
Truth asks ; but saddened penitently, at close,
By sweet remembrance of the sainted soul
Once loved, aye hallowed ; still a force on high,
Heart-purifying. Oh ! still in scenes like this,
Youth lingers longest, drawing out his time
As goldbeater his wire attenuates, till
It would reach round earth, and be of no use, then.

Party and Entertainment.—Garden : Fountains.

FESTUS, HELEN, LUCIFER, CHARLES, LUCY, and OTHERS.

FESTUS. My Helen, let us rest awhile,
For most I love thy calmer smile ;
We'll not be missed from yon gay throng,
They dance so eagerly and long ;
And were one half to go away,
I'll bet the rest would scarce perceive it.

HELEN. With thee I either go or stay,
Prepared, the same, to like or leave it ;
These two perhaps will take our places ;

They seem to stand with longing faces.

FESTUS. Then sit we, love, and sip with me,
And I will teach thyself to thee.

Thy nature is so pure and fine,

'Tis most like wine ;

Thy blood, which blushes through each vein,

Rosy champagne ;

And the fair skin which o'er it grows,

Bright as its snows.

Thy wit, which thou dost work so well,

Is like cool moselle ;

Like madeira, bright and warm,

Is thy smile's charm ;

Claret's glory hath thine eye,

Or mine must lie ;

But nought can like thy lips possess

Deliciousness ;

And now that thou'rt divinely merry,

I'll kiss and call thee sparkling sherry.

HELEN. I sometimes dream that thou wilt leave me

Without thy love, even me, lonely ;

And oft I think, though oft it grieve me,

That I am not thy one love only :

But I shall alway love thee till

This heart like earth in death, stand still.

FESTUS. I love thee, and will leave thee never,

Until my soul leave life for ever.

If earth can from her children run,

And leave the seasons, leave the sun ;

If yonder stars can leave the sky,

Bright truants from their home in heaven ;

Immortals who deserve to die,

Were death not too good to be given ;

If heaven can leave and live from God,

And man tread off his cradle clod ;

If God can leave the world he sowed,

Right in the heart of space to fade ;

Soul, earth, star, heaven, man, world, and God

May part ; not I from thee, sweet maid.

Ah, see again my favourite dance,

See the wavelike line advance ;

And now in circles break,

Like raindrops on a lake :

Now it opens, now it closes,

Like a wreath dropping into roses.

HELEN. It is a lovely scene,

Fair as aught on earth ;

And we feel, when it hath been,

At heart a dearth ;

As from the breaking up of some bright dream ;

The failing of a fountain's spray-topped stream.

WILL. Ladies, your leave ; we'll choose a queen,

To rule this fair and festive scene.

CHARLES. And it were best to choose by lot
So none can hold herself forgot.

[*They draw lots : it falls to Helen.*]

FESTUS. I knew, my love, how this would be ;
I knew that fate must favour thee.

ALL. Lady fair ! we throne thee queen :
Be thy sway as thou hast been,
Light, and lovely, and serene.

FESTUS. Here, wear this wreath. No ruder crown
Should deck that dazzling brow ;
Or ask yon halo from the moon ;
'Twould well beseem thee now.

I crown thee, love ; I crown thee, **love** ;

I crown thee queen of me ;

And oh ! but I am a happy land,

And a loyal land to thee.

I crown thee, love ; I crown thee, **love** ;

Thou art queen in thine own right :

Feel ! my heart is as full as a town of joy ;

Look ! I've crowded mine eyes with light.

I crown thee, love ; I crown thee, **love** ;

Thou art queen by right divine ;

And thy love shall set, neither night nor day,

O'er this subject heart of mine.

I crown thee, love ; I crown thee, **love** ;

Thou art queen by the right of the strong ;

And thou didst but win where thou mightst **have slain**,

Or have bounden in thralldom long.

I crown thee, love ; I crown thee, **love** ;

Thou art my queen for aye ;

As the moon doth queen the night, my **love** ;

As the night doth crown the day.

I crown thee, love ; I crown thee, **love** ;

Queen of the brave and free ;

For I'm brave to all beauty but thine, my **love** ;

And free to all beauty by thee.

HELEN. Here, in this court of pleasure, blessed to reign,

If not the loveliest, where all are fair,

We still, one hour, our royalty retain,

To out-queen all in kindness and in care.

Love, beauty, honour, bravery, and wit ;

Was ever queen served by such noble slaves ?

The peerage of the heart—for heaven's court fit :

We'll dream no more that earth hath ills or graves.

With mirth and melody, and love we reign :

Begin we, then, our sweet and pleasurable sway ;

And here, though light, so strong is beauty's chain,

That none shall know how blindly they obey.

We have but to lay on one light command ;

That all shall do the most what best they love ;

And Pleasure hath her punishments at hand

For all who will not pleasure's rule approve.
 But no ! there's none of us can disobey,
 Since, by our one command, we free ye thus ;
 And, as our powers must on your pleasures stay—
 Support—and you will reign along with us.

FESTUS. Ha ! Lucifer ! How now ?

LUCIFER. I come in sooth to keep my vow.

FESTUS. Thy vow ?

LUCIFER. To revel in earth's pleasures,
 And tire down mirth in her own measures.

FESTUS. Go thy ways : I shrink and tremble
 To think how deep thou canst dissemble ;
 For who would dream that in yon breast
 The heart of hell was burning ?
 Or deem that strange and listless guest
 Some priceless spirit earning ?
 I hear methinks from every footstep rise
 A trampled spirit's smothered cries.

LUCIFER. But for yon jocund wight, I fear ;
 Just in the nick of time we met ;
 I stopped, and asked him where you were ;
 His kindness I shall ne'er forget
 Small chance had I of being here.
 I think it quite ungenerous in you,
 At such gay gatherings as the present,
 My once-loved converse to eschew,
 Just as I meant to make things pleasant.
 It's rather hard when one has called
 The club, to be yourself black-balled.

CHARLES. Fest, engage fair Marian's hand.

FESTUS. Pass me ; she is free no less
 Than I, who by my queen will stand ;
 May it please her loveliness !

HELEN. Festus, we know the love, and see,
 Which was with Marian and thee,
 Our early friend, once Clara called,
 But now from us long while estranged ;
 In all, except her hopeless love
 For thee, her faithless lover, changed ;
 And we would see ye once again,
 I nothing doubt, resume.

MARIAN. In vain,
 I wish it not. I do but strive,
 A love though buried still alive,
 To hallow with the dearer name
 That sheltered its first flickering flame.
 He seeks another. Though he range
 From heart to heart, not I shall change.
 Love veered unbidden ; he yet may learn
 Unsought, unsolaced, to return.

HELEN. I hold him not against his will ;
 Thine he may be, thine only still.

LUCIFER. Well-rooted plants soon fruit. A lighter love
Will lighter instincts in him move.
These joys, these raptures of mere sense,
Senseless, enjoyment's pure pretence,
Must surely cloud all innocence.
And as he gains in knowledge high
Of spirit, nature, destiny,
Faith, fostered by yon faithful soul,
So ripe in love, so rich in dole,
Faith must as surely in him die.

FESTUS. I marvel at myself. There seems
A power within me bids me claim
A freedom like space-filling dreams,
Which are, and are not, but in name ;
A fateful freedom, all the same ;
Wherefrom I vainly try to shape
Some way of conquest or escape.

LUCIFER. My schemes succeed as soon as planned ;
Needs must, if so and so but drive ;
When once you know your neighbour's hand,
It's wondrous how your game will thrive.

CHARLES. Of freedom we'll have no abuse.
Dance with your royal fair.

LUCIFER. Make no excuse.

FESTUS. Rebellion pleases most, though little use.
I will not dance to-night again,
Though bid by all the queens that reign.

HELEN. What, Festus ! treason and disloyalty
Already to our gentle royalty ?

FESTUS. No—I was wrong—but to forgive
Be thy sublime prerogative !

HELEN. Most amply, then, I pardon thee ;
In proof whereof, come dance with me.

[A dance.

LAURENCE. How sweetly Marian sweeps along ;
Her step is music, and her voice is song.
Silver-sandalled foot ! how blest
To bear the breathing heaven above,
Which on thee, Atlas-like, doth rest,
And round thee move.
Ah ! that sweet little foot : I swear
I could kneel down and kiss it there.
I should not mind if she were Pope ;
I would change my faith.

CHARLES. Works, too, we hope.

LAURENCE. Ah ! smile on me again with that sweet smile,
Which could from heaven my soul to thee beguile ;
As I mine eye would turn from awful skies
To hail the child of sun and storm arise ;
Or, from eve's holy azure, to the star
Which beams and becks the spirit from afar ;
For fair as yon star-wreath which high doth shine,
And worthy but to deck a brow like thine ;

Pure as the light from orbs which ne'er
 Hath blessed us yet in this far sphere
 As eyes of seraphs lift alone,
 Through ages on the holy throne ;
 So bright, so fair, so free from guile,
 And freshening to my heart thy smile ;
 Ay, passing all things here, and all above,
 To me, thy look of beauty, truth, and love.

MARIAN. Pray, heed me not. 'Twere vain to me
 To pay thy heart's lost fealty.

HARRY. Thy friend hath led his lady out.

FESTUS. He looks most wickedly devout.

FANNY. When introduced, he said he knew her,
 And had been long devoted to her.

EMMA. Indeed—but he is too gallant,
 And serves me far more than I want.
 He vows that he could worship me ;
 Why, look ! he is now upon his knee.

LUCIFER. I quaff to thee this cup of wine,
 And would, though men had nought but brine ;
 E'en the brine of their own tears,
 To cool those lying lips of theirs ;
 And were it all one molten pearl,
 I would drain it to thee, girl ;
 Ay, though each drop were worth of gold
 Too many pieces to be sold ;
 And though for each I drank to thee,
 Fate add an age of misery :
 For thou canst conjure up my spirit
 To aught immortals may inherit ;
 To good or evil, woe or weal,
 To all that fiends or angels feel ;
 And wert thou to perdition given,
 I'd join thee, in the scorn of heaven !

EMMA. Oh fy ! to only think of such a fate !

LUCIFER. Better than not to think on't till too late.
 They'd not believe me, Festus, if I told them,
 That hell, and all its hosts, this hour behold them.

FESTUS. Scarcely ; that demon here again !

But though my heart burst in the strain
 I will be happy might and main !
 So wreath my brow with flowers,
 And pour me purple wine,
 And make the merry hours
 Dance, dance with glee like thine.
 While thus enraptured, I and thou,
 Love crowns the heart, as flowers the brow.
 The rosy garland twine
 Around the noble bowl,
 Like laughing loves that shine
 Upon the generous soul ;
 Be mine, dear maid, the loves, and thou

Shalt ever bosom them as now.
 Then plunge the blushing wreath
 Deep in the ruddy wine ;
 As the love of thee till death
 Is deep in heart of mine ;
 While both are blooming on my brow
 I cannot be more blessed than now.

LUCIFER. Thou talkst of hearts in style to me quite fresh :
 The human heart's about a pound of flesh.

FESTUS. Forgive him, love, and aught he says.

HELEN. What is that trickling down thy face ?

FESTUS. Oh, love, that is only wine,
 From the wreath which thou didst twine ;
 And, casting in the bowl, I bound,
 For coolness' sake, my temples round.

HELEN. I thought 'twas a thorn which was tearing thy brow ;
 And if it were only a rose-thorn was tearing,
 Why, whether of gold or of roses, as now,
 A crown, if it hurt us, is hardly worth wearing.

LUCY. From what fair maid hadst thou that flower ?
 It came not from my wreath, nor me.

CHARLES. Love lives in thee as in a bower,
 And sure this must have dropped from thee ;
 From thy lip, or from thy cheek :
 See, its sister blushes speak.

Nay, never harm the harmless rose,
 Though given by a stranger maid ;
 'Tis sad enough to feel that flower
 Feels it must fade.

And trouble not the transient love,
 Though by another's side I sigh ;
 It is enough to feel the flame
 Flicker and die.

And thou to me art flame and flower,
 Of rosier body, brighter breath ;
 But softer, warmer than the truth ;
 As sleep than death.

FESTUS. The dead of night : earth seems but seeming ;
 The soul seems but a something dreaming.

The bird is dreaming in its nest,
 Of song, and sky, and loved one's breast ;
 The lap-dog dreams, as round he lies,
 In moonshine, of his mistress' eyes :
 The steed is dreaming, in his stall,
 Of one long breathless leap and fall :
 The hawk hath dreamed him thrice of wings
 Wide as the skies he may not cleave ;
 But waking, feels them clipped, and clings
 Mad to the perch 'twere mad to leave :
 The child is dreaming of its toys ;
 The murderer, of calm home joys ;
 The weak ~~and~~ dreaming endless fears ;

The proud of how their pride appears
 The poor enthusiast who dies,
 Of his life-dreams the sacrifice,
 Sees, as enthusiast only can,
 The truth that made him more than man ;
 And hears once more, in visioned trance,
 That voice commanding to advance,
 Where wealth is gained ; love, wisdom won ;
 Or deeds of danger dared and done.
 The mother dreameth of her child ;
 The maid of him who hath beguiled ;
 The youth of her he loves too well ;
 The good of God ; the ill of hell ;
 Who live of death ; of life who die ;
 The dead of immortality.
 The earth is dreaming back her youth ;
 Hell never dreams, for woe is truth ;
 And heaven is dreaming o'er her prime,
 Long ere the morning stars of time ;
 And dream of heaven alone can I,
 My lovely one, when thou art nigh.

HELEN. Let some one sing. Love, mirth, and song,
 The graces of this life of ours,
 Go ever hand in hand along,
 And ask alike each other's powers.

LUCY (*sings*). For every leaf the loveliest flower
 Which beauty sighs for from her bower ;
 For every star a drop of dew ;
 For every sun a sky of blue ;
 For every heart a heart as true.

For every tear by pity shed
 Upon a fellow-sufferer's head,
 Oh ! be a crown of glory given ;
 Such crowns as saints to gain have striven,
 Such crowns as seraphs wear in heaven.

For all who toil at honest fame,
 A proud, a pure, a deathless name ;
 For all who love, who loving bless,
 Be life one long, kind, close caress ;
 Be life all love, all happiness.

WILL. How can we better time employ,
 Than celebrate, with every breath,
 Through hours that laugh themselves to death,
 This bridal feast of love and joy ?

FESTUS. That song reminds me, but it may not be ;
 No ! I am sailing on another sea.

LUCIFER. Tell me what's the chiefest pleasure
 In this world's high heap'd measure !

ALL. Power, beauty, love, wealth, wine !

LUCIFER. All different votes !

FANNY. Come, Frederic, thine
 What may thy joy-judgment be ?

FREDERIC. I scarce know how to answer thee ;

Each, apart, too soon will tire ;
 Altogether slake desire.
 So ask not of me the one chief joy of earth,
 For that I'm unable to say ;
 But here is a wreath that will lose its chief worth,
 If ye pluck but one flower away.
 Then these are the joys which should never dispart—
 The joys that are dearest to me :
 As the song, and the dance, and the laugh of the heart,
 Thou, girl, and the goblet, be.

LUCIFER. Oh, excellent ! the truth is clear ;
 The one opinion, too, I love to hear.

HELEN. Is this a queen's fate, to be left alone ?
 I wish another had the throne.
 Festus ! why art thou not here,
 Beside thy liege and lady dear ?

FESTUS. My thoughts are happier oft than I,
 For they are ever, love, with thee ;
 And thine, I know, as frequent fly
 O'er all that severs us, to me :
 Like rays of stars, that meet in space,
 And mingle in a bright embrace.
 Never load thy locks with flowers,
 For thy cheek hath a richer flush ;
 And than wine, or the sunset hour,
 Or the ripe yew-berry's blush.
 Never braid thy brow with lights,
 Like the sun, on his golden way
 To the neck and the locks of night,
 From the forehead fair of day.
 Never star thy hand with stones,
 For, for every dead light there,
 Is a living glory gone,
 Than the brilliant far more fair.
 Nay, nay ; wear thy buds, braids, gems ;
 Let the lovely never part ;
 Thou alone canst rival them,
 Or in nature, or in art.
 Be not sad ; thou shalt not be :
 Why wilt mourn, love, when with me ?
 One tear that in thine eye could start
 Could wash all purpose from my heart
 But that of loving thee ;
 If I could ever think to wrong
 A love so riverlike, deep, pure, and long.

HELEN. I cast mine eyes around, and feel
 There is a blessing wanting ;
 Too soon our hearts the truth reveal,
 That joy is disenchanting.

FESTUS. I am a wizard, love ; and I
 A new enchantment will supply ;

And the charm of thine own smile
 Shall thine own heart of grief beguile
 Smile, I do command thee, rise
 From the bright depths of those eyes ;
 By the bloom wherein thou dwellest,
 As in a rose-leaved nest ;
 By the pleasure which thou tellest,
 And the bosom which thou swellest,
 I bid thee rise from rest ;
 By the rapture which thou causest,
 And the bliss while e'er thou pausest,
 Obey my high behest.

HELEN. Dread magician ! cease thy spell ;
 It hath wrought both quick and well.

FESTUS. Ah ! thou hast dissolved the charm ;
 Ah ! thou hast outstepped the ring ;
 Who shall answer for the harm
 Beauty on herself will bring ?
 Come, I will conjure up again that smile,
 The scarce departed spirit. There it is !
 Settling and hovering round thy lips the while,
 Like some bright angel o'er the gates of bliss.
 And I could sit and set that rose-bright smile,
 Until it seemed to grow immortal there ;
 A something abstract even of all beauty,
 As though 'twere in the eye, or in the air.
 Ah ! never may a heavier shadow rest
 Than thine own ringlets' on that brow so fair ;
 Nor sob, nor sorrow, shake the perfect breast
 Which looks for love, as doth for death despair.
 And now the smile, the sigh, the blush, the tear,
 Lo ! all the elements of love are here.
 Nay, wither not, with doubt's mistrustful sigh,
 Love's tender, ah ! too quickly perishing leaf :
 Nor let one briny tearlet beauty's eye
 O'ercloud with life embittering grief.
 Oh ! weep not, sigh not ; woe, nor mortal wrath,
 Should taint with sad defect a soul like thine ;
 Say, is it given the rule-less lightning's path
 Earth-blinding, e'er to strike the stars divine ?
 Sing, then, while thy lover sips,
 And hear the truth that wine discloses ;
 Music lives within thy lips,
 Like a nightingale in roses.

HELEN (*sings*). Oh ! love is like the rose,
 And a month it may not see,
 Ere it withers where it grows ;
 Rosalie !

I loved thee from afar ;
 Oh ! my heart was lift to thee,
 Like a glass up to a star ;
 Rosalie !

Thine eye was glassed in mine,
 As the moon is in the sea :
 And its shine was on the brine ;
 Rosalie !

The rose hath lost its red ;
 And the star is in the sea ;
 And the briny tear is shed ;
 Rosalie !

FESTUS. What the stars are to the night, my love,
 What its pearls are to the sea ;
 What the dew is to the day, my love,
 Thy beauty is to me.

HELEN. I am but here the under-queen of beauty,
 For yonder hangs the likeness of the goddess ;
 And so to worship her is our first duty.
 The heavenly minds of old first taught the heavenly bodies
 Were to be worshipped ; and the idolatry
 Holds to this hour ; though, Beauty ! but of thine.
 I am thy priestess, and will worship thee,
 With all this brave and lovely train of mine ;
 Lo ! we all kneel to thee before thy pictured shrine.
 Yes, there, thou goddess of the heart,
 Immortal beauty, there !
 Thou glory of Jove's free-love skies,
 E'en like thyself too fair,
 Too bright, too sweet for mortal eyes,
 For earthly hearts too strong ;
 Thy golden girdle liftst, and drawest
 The heavens and earth along.
 Oh ! thou art as the cloudless moon,
 Undimmed and unrayed ;
 No robe hast thou, no crown save yon,
 Goddess ! thy long locks' soft and sunbright braid,
 And there's thy son, Love, beauty's child,
 World-known for strangest powers ;
 Boy-god ! thy place is blest o'er all ;
 Smil'st thou at thoughts of ours ?
 And there, by thy luxurious side,
 The queen of heaven and Jove
 Stands ; and the deep delirious draught
 Drinks, from thy looks, of love,
 And lips, which oft have kissed away
 The thunders from his brow,
 Who ruled, men say, the world of worlds,
 As God our God rules now.
 And thou art yet as great o'er this,
 As erst o'er olden sky ;
 Of all heaven's darkened deities,
 The last live light on high.
 God after god hath left thee lone,
 Which lived on human breath ;

When prayers were breathed to them no more,
 The false ones pined to death.
 But in the service of young hearts
 To loveliness and love,
 Live thou shalt, while yon wandering world,
 Named unto thee, shall move.
 No fabled dream art thou ; all god,
 Our souls acknowledge thee ;
 For what would life, from love, be worth,
 Or love from beauty be ?
 Come, universal beauty, then,
 Thou apple of God's eye,
 To and through which all things were made,
 Things deathless, things that die ;
 Oh ! lighten, live before us there ;
 Leap in yon lovely form,
 And give a soul. She comes ! It breathes ;
 So bright, so sweet, so warm.
 Our sacrifice is over ; let us rise ;
 For we have worshipped acceptably here ;
 And let our glowing hearts and glimmering eyes,
 O'erstrained with gazing on thy light too near,
 Prove that our worship, goddess, was sincere.

FESTUS. I read that we are answered. The soft air
 Doubles its sweetness ; and the fainting flowers,
 Down hanging on the walls in wreaths so fair,
 Bud forth afresh, as in their birth-day bowers,
 Dew-laden, as oppressed with love and shame,
 The rose-bud drops upon the lily's breast ;
 Brighter the wine, the lamps have softer flame ;
 Thy kiss flows freelier than the grape first pressed.
 Life lightly lies on us, as in time's first hours,
 Olympian, when the immortals went and came,
 And skies crystalline heaven and earth both blessed.

WILL. A dance, a dance !

HELEN.

Let us remain.

FESTUS. We will not tempt your sport again.

HELEN. Behold where Marian sits alone,
 The dance all sweeping round,
 Like to some goddess hewn in stone,
 With blooming garlands bound.

FESTUS. Tell me, Marian, what those eyes
 Can discover in the skies,
 Whereon thou gazest with such ecstasies ?

MARIAN. For earth my soul hath lost all love,
 But heaven still loves and watches o'er me ;
 Why should I not, then, look above,
 And pass, and pity all before me ?

FESTUS. Oh ! if yon worlds that shine o'er this,
 Have more of joy, of passion less,
 I would not change earth's chequered bliss
 For thrice the joy those orbs possess ;

Which seem, so strange their nature is,
Faint with excess of happiness.

MARIAN. Thy heart with others hath its rest,
And it shall wake with me ;
And if within another breast
That heart hath made itself a nest,
Mine is no more for thee.
Heart-breaker, go ! I cannot choose
But love thee, and thy love refuse ;
And if my brow grow lined while young,
And youth fly cheated from my cheek,
'Tis that there lies below my tongue
A word I will not speak :
For I would rather die than deem
Thou art not the glory thou didst seem.
But if engirt by flood or fire,
Who would live that could expire ?
Who would not dream, and dreaming die,
If to wake were misery ?

FESTUS. Whose woes are like to my woes ? What is madness ?
The mind exalted to a sense of ill
Soon sinks beyond it into utter sadness,
And sees its grief before it like a hill.
Oh ! I have suffered till my brain became
Distinct with woe, as is the skeleton leaf
Whose green hath fretted off its fibrous frame,
And bare to our immortality of grief.
Deep in my heart there lies, as in truth's well,
The image of thy soul ;
But ah ! that fountain once so sweet, by spell
Of power is sealed, beyond my will's control.

MARIAN. Like the light line that laughter leaves
One moment on a bright young brow,
So truth is lost ere love believes
There can be aught save truth below.

FESTUS. But as the eye aye brightlier beams
For every fall the lid lets on it,
So oft the fond heart happier dreams
For the soft cheats love puts upon it.

MARIAN. I never dreamed of wretchedness ;
I thought to love meant but to bless.

FESTUS. It once was bliss to me to watch
Thy passing smile, and sit and catch
The sweet contagion of thy breath,
For love is catching, from such teeth ;
Delicate little pearl-white wedges,
All transparent at the edges.

MARIAN. False flatterer, cease.

FESTUS. It is my fate
To love, and make who love me hate.

MARIAN. No ! 'tis to sue, to gain, deceive ;
To tire of, to neglect, and leave.

The desolation of the soul
Is what I feel ;
A sense of lostness that leaves death
But little to reveal ;
For death is nothing but the thought
Of something being again nought.

HELEN. Cease, lady, cease those aching sighs,
Which shake the tear-drops from thine eyes,
As morning wind, with wing fresh wet,
Shakes dew out of the violet.
Forgive me if the love once thine
Hath changed itself unsought to me ;
I did not tempt it from thy heart,
I planned no treason against thee ;
And soon, perchance, 'twill be my part
As thou now art, to be.

MARIAN. I blame no heart, no love, no fate ;
And I have nothing to forgive :
I wish for nought, repent of nought,
Regret nought, but to live.

HELEN. Nay, sing ; it will relieve thy heart.

MARIAN. I cannot sing a mirthful strain ;
And feel too much to act my part,
E'en of an ebbing vein.

FESTUS. Our hearts are not in our own hands ;
Why wilt thou make me say,
I cannot love as once I loved ?

MARIAN. Hear ! 'tis for this I stay ;
To say we part, for ever part ;
But oh ! how wide the line
Between thy Marian's bursting heart,
And that proud heart of thine.
For thou wilt wander here and there,
Ever the gay and free ;
To other maids wilt fondly swear,
As thou hast sworn to me ;
And I, oh ! I shall but retire
Into my grief alone ;
And kindle there the hidden fire,
That burns, that wastes unknown.
And love and life shall find their tomb
In that sepulchral flame ;
Be happy ; none shall know for whom ;
I will not dream thy name.

FESTUS. As sings the swan with parting breath,
So I to thee ;
While love is leaving, worse than life,
Forewarningly.
Speak not, nor think thou any ill of me,
The son of destiny, the crown of fate,
The pen of power which writes earth's future state,
If thou wouldst not die soon, and wretchedly,

Oppressed with sense of passed felicity ;
 Passed yet perchance to dawn again on thee.
 Behold me bound beneath the threefold spell,
 Which heaven hath laid upon me, earth, and hell
 It may be that I love thee even now
 More than my tortured spirit dare avow ;
 It may be that the clouds which dim my gaze,
 Though rich with roseate gold, are full of scath,
 And may disperse 'neath thy soul's purer rays ;
 But now I cannot waver on my path ;
 Nor condescend the world to undeceive,
 Which doth delight in error and believe.
 Time will unfold whate'er we have of truth,
 As ripening years the greener growth of youth.
 Thus then, farewell, dear maiden, ere I go ;
 Thus dearly have I earned my rightful woe.

Oh ! if we e'er have loved, lady,
 We must forego it now ;
 Though sore the heart be moved, lady,
 When bound to break its vow.
 I'll always think on thee,
 And thou sometimes—on whom, lady !
 And yet those thoughts must be
 Like flowers flung on the tomb, lady.
 Then think that I am blest, lady,
 Though aye for thee I sigh ;
 In peace and beauty rest, lady,
 Nor mourn, and mourn, as I.

From one we love to part, lady,
 Is harder than to die ;
 I see it by thy heart, lady,
 I feel it by thine eye.
 Thy lightest look can tell
 Thy heaviest thought to me, lady ;
 Oh ! I have loved thee well,
 But well seems ill with thee, lady !
 Though sore the heart be moved, lady,
 When bound to break its vow.
 Yet if we ever loved, lady,
 We must forego it now.

MARIAN. Whate'er thou dost, where'er thou goest
 My heart is only thine, thou knowest.

LUCIFER. Come, I must separate you two ;
 Such wretchedness will never do.

The little cloud of grief which just appears,
 If left to spread, will drown us all in tears.

EMMA. Oblige us, pray, then, with a song.

CHARLES. I'm sure he has a singing face.

WILL. At church I heard him loud and long.

LUCIFER. Pardon ; but you are doubly wrong.

HELEN. Obey, I beg. Here, give him place.

LUCIFER. I have not sung for ages, mind :
 So you must take me as you find.

This is a song supposed of one,
 A fallen spirit, name unknown,

Fettered upon his fiery throne ;
 Calling on his once angel-love,
 Who still remaineth true above.

Thou hast more music in thy voice
 Than to the spheres is given,
 And more temptations on thy lips
 Than lost the angels heaven.
 Thou hast more brightness in thine eyes
 Than all the stars which burn,
 More dazzling art thou than the throne
 We fallen dared to spurn.

Go search through heaven ; the sweetest smile
 That lightens there is thine ;
 And through hell's burning darkness breaks
 No frown so fell as mine.
 One smile, 'twill light, one tear, 'twill cool ;
 These will be more to me
 Than all the wealth of all the worlds,
 Or boundless power could be.

HELEN. Entreat him, pray, to sing again.

LUCIFER. Any thing any one desires.

FESTUS. Your loveliness hath but to deign
 To will, and he'll do all that will requires.

LUCIFER (*sings*). Oh ! many a cloud
 Hath lift its wing ;
 And many a leaf
 Hath clad the spring ;
 But there shall be thrice
 The leaf and cloud,
 And thrice shall the world
 Have worn her shroud ;
 Ere there's any like thee,
 But where thou wilt be.

Oh ! many a storm
 Hath drenched the sun ;
 And many a stream
 To sea hath run ;
 But there shall be thrice
 The storm and stream,
 Ere there's any like thee,
 But in angel's dream ;
 Or in look, or in love,
 But in heaven above.

LUCY. What is love ? Oh ! I wonder so :
 Do tell me ; who pretends to know ?

FRANK. Ask not of me, love, what is love !
 Ask what is good of God above ;
 Ask of the great sun what is light ;
 Ask what is darkness of the night ;
 Ask sin of what may be forgiven ;
 Ask what is happiness of heaven ;
 Ask what is folly of the crowd ;
 Ask what is fashion of the shroud ;
 Ask what is sweetness of thy kiss ;
 Ask of thyself what beauty is ;

And if they each should answer, I !
Let me, too, join them, with a sigh.
Oh ! let me pray my life may prove,
When thus, with thee, that I am love.

FESTUS. I cannot love as I have loved,
And yet I know not why ;
It is the one great woe of life
To feel all feeling die :
And one by one the heartstrings snap
As age comes on so chill :
And hope seems left that hope may cease,
And all will soon be still.
And the strong passions, like to storms,
Soon rage themselves to rest ;
Or leave a desolated calm,
A worn and wasted breast ;
A heart that like the Geyser spring,
Amidst its bosomed snows,
May shrink, not rest ; but with its blood
Boils even in repose.
And yet the things one might have loved
Remain as they have been ;
Truth ever lovely, and one heart
Still sacred and serene ;
But lower, less, and grosser things
Eclipse the world-like mind ;
And leave their cold dark shadow where
Most to the light inclined.
And then it ends as it began,
The orbit of our race,
In pains and tears, and fears of life,
And the new dwelling place.
From life to death, from death to life,
We hurry round to God ;
And leave behind us nothing save
The path that we have trod.

HELEN. In vain I try to lure thy heart
From grief to mirth ;
It were as easy to ward off
Night from the earth.

FESTUS. Fill ! I'll drink it till I die,
Helen's lip and Helen's eye !
An eye which outsparkles
The beads of the wine,
With a hue which outdarkles
The deeps where they shine.
Come ! with that lightly flushing brow,
And darkly splendid eye ;
And white and wavy arms which now,
Like snow-wreaths on the dark brown bough,
So softly on me lie.
Come ! let us love, while love we may,

Ere youth's bright sands be run ;
 The hour is nigh when every soul,
 Which 'scapeth evil's dread control,
 Nor drains the furies' fiery bowl,
 Shall into heaven for aye,
 And love its God alone.

HELEN. Now let me leave my throne ; and if the hours
 Have measured every moment by a kiss,
 As I do think, since first ye gave these flowers,
 It was to teach us how to dial bliss.
 Farewell, dear crown, thy mistress will not wear,
 Save when she sitteth royally alone.
 Farewell, too, throne ! not quickly wilt thou bear
 A happier form, if fairer than mine own.

WILL. The ladies leave us !

LUCIFER. Oh ; by all means let them ;
 But say, for heaven itself, we'll not forget them ;
 Say we will pledge them to the top of breath,
 As loud as thunder, and as deep as death.

FESTUS (*apart*). Methinks I hear in every sigh
 Of wind, that stirs the illumined bowers,
 A whisper of the immortal powers
 Reproachful, from death's spoils that lie,
 In happiest alchemy,
 Transfiguring themselves to flowers.
 Oh ! for thy grave, my love !
 I want to weep.

High as thou art this earth above,
 My woe is deep ;
 And cold my heart is as thy grave,
 Where I can neither soothe nor save.
 Whate'er I say, or do, or see,
 I think and feel, alone to thee.
 Oh ! can it, can it be forgiven,
 That I forget thou art in heaven ?
 Thou wilt forgive me this, and more :
 Love spends his all, and still hath store.
 Thou wilt forgive, if beauty's wile
 Should win, perforce, one glance from me ;
 When they whose art it is to smile
 Can never smile my heart from thee ;
 And if with them I chance to be,
 And give mine ear up to their singing,
 It, windlike, only wakes the sea,
 In all its mad monotony,
 Of memory forth thy music ringing
 Thou wilt forgive, if, now and then,
 I link with hands less loved than thine,
 Whose goldlike touch makes kings of men
 But wakes no will in blood of mine ;
 And if with them I toss the wine,
 And set my soul in love's ripe riot,

It echoes not, this desert shrine,
Where still thy love from heaven doth shine,
Moon-like, across some ruin's quiet.
Thou wilt forgive me, if my feet
Should move to music with the fair ;
When, at each turn, I burn to meet
Thy stream-like step, and æry air ;
And if before some beauty there,
Mine eye may forge one glance of gladness,
It is but the ripple of despair
That shows the bed is all but bare,
And nought scarce left but stony sadness.
Thou wilt forgive, if e'er my heart
Err from the orbit of its love ;
When even the bliss-bright stars will start
Earthwards, some lower sphere to prove.
And if these lips but rarely pine
In the pale abstinence of sorrow,
It is, that nightly I divine,
As I this world-sick soul recline,
I shall be with thee ere the morrow.
Thou wilt forgive, if once with thee
I limned the outline of a heaven ;
But go and tell our God, from me,
He must forgive what he hath given ;
And if we be by passion driven
To love, and all its natural madness,
Tell him that man by love hath thriven,
And that by love he shall be shriven ;
For God is love, where love is gladness.
Perchance thy spirit still stays in yon mild star,
In peace and flame-like purity, and prayer ;
And, oh ! when mine shall fly from earth afar,
I will pray God that it may join thine there ;
'Twere doubling heaven, that heaven with thee to share.
And while thou ledest music and her lyre,
Like a sunbeam holden by its golden hair,
May I, too, mingling with the immortal choir,
Love thee, and worship God ! what more may soul desire ?
Enough for me ; but if there be
More, it shall be left for thee.

WALTER. If anything I love in chief,
It is that flowery rich relief
That wine doth chase on mortal metal
Before good wine begins to settle ;
But all seem smilingly, serenely dull,
And melancholy as the moon at full.
Quenched by their company they seem,
Like sparks of fire in clouds of steam.

CHARLES. They who mourn the lack of wit,
Show, at least, no more of it.

FESTUS. I cannot bear to be alone,

I hate to mix with men ;
 To me there's torture in the tone
 Which bids me talk again.
 Like silly nestlings, warned in vain,
 My heart's young joys have flown ;
 While singing to them, even then,
 They left me, one by one.
 I envy every soul that dies
 Out of this world of care ;
 I envy e'en the lifeless skies,
 That they enshrine thee there ;
 And would I were the bright blue air
 Which doth insphere thine eyes,
 That thou mightst meet me everywhere,
 And feel these faithful sighs.
 E'en as the bubble that is mixed
 Of air and wine right red,
 So my heart's love is shared betwixt
 The living and the dead.
 If on her breast I lay my head,
 My heart on thine is fixed :—
 Wilt thou I loose, as I have said,
 Or keep the soul thou seekst ?
 From me thou canst not pass away
 While I have soul or sight ;
 I see thee on my waking way,
 And in my dreams thee bright ;
 I see thee in the dead of night,
 And the full life of day ;
 I know thee by a sudden light ;
 It is thy soul, I say.
 If yonder stars be filled with forms
 Of breathing clay like ours,
 Perchance the space that spreads between
 Is for a spirit's powers ;
 And loving as we two have loved,
 In spirit and in heart,
 Whether to space or star removed,
 God will not bid us part.

FESTUS. How sweetly shine the steadfast stars,
 Each eyeing, sister-like, the earth :
 And softly chiding scenes like this,
 Of senseless and profaning mirth.

LUCIFER. Thou art ever prating of the stars,
 Like an old soldier of his scars :
 Thou shouldst have been a starling, friend,
 And not an earthling : end !

FESTUS. And could I speak as many times
 Of each as there are stars in heaven,
 I could not utter half the thoughts—
 The sweet thoughts one to me hath given.
 The holy quiet of the skies

May waken well the blush of shame,
 Whene'er we think that thither lies
 The heaven we heed not, ought not name.
 Oh, heaven ! let down thy cloudy lids,
 And close thy thousand eyes ;
 For each, in burning glances, bids
 The wicked fool be wise.

LUCIFER. I can interpret well the stars.

CHARLES. Indeed, they need interpreters ;
 And once, myself, I own, desired
 To cast their meanings into verse ;
 But found the feelings so inspired,
 Inapt, as sunshine on a hearse :
 And you no doubt will find it worse.

LUCIFER. Then thus, in their eternal tongue,
 And musical thunders, all have sung,
 To every ear which ear hath given,
 From birth to death, this note of heaven :
 Deathlings ! on earth drink, laugh, and love :
 Ye mayn't hereafter, under or above.
 Yes, this the tale they all have told
 Since first they made old Chaos shrink ;
 Since first they flocked creation's fold,
 And filled all air as flakes of gold
 Bedrop yon royal drink.
 For as the moon doth madmen rule,
 It is, that near and few they are :
 And so in heaven each single star
 Doth sway some reasonable fool.
 Whether on earth or other sphere ;
 For what's above is what is here.
 Moons and madmen only change ;
 What can truth or stars derange ?

EDWARD. Brave stars, bright monitors of joy
 Right well ye time your hours of warning ;
 For, sooth to say, the eve's employ
 Doth wax less lovely towards the morning.
 So push the goblet gaily round ;
 Drink deep of its wealth, drink on ;
 Our earthly joy too soon doth cloy,
 Our life is all but gone ;
 And, not enjoy yon glorious cup,
 And all the sweets which lie,
 Like pearls within its purple well,
 Who would not hate to die ?

WILL. And who, without the cheering glance
 Of woman's witching eye,
 Could stand against the storms of fate,
 Or cankering care defy ?
 It adds fresh brightness to the bowl ;
 Then why will men repine ?
 Content we'll live with heaven's best gifts,

With woman, and with wine.

HARRY. Cups while they sparkle,
 Maids while they sigh ;
 Bright eyes will darkle,
 Lips grow dry.
 Cheek while the dew-drops
 Water its rose ;
 Life's fount hath few drops
 Dear as those.
 Arms while they tighten ;
 Hearts as they heave ;
 Love cannot brighten
 Life's dark eve.

GEORGE. Oh ! the wine is like life ;
 And the sparkles that play,
 By the lips of the bowl,
 Are the loves of the day.
 Then kiss the bright bubble
 That breaks in its rise ;
 Let love be a trouble
 As light, when it dies.

FESTUS. Well might the thoughtful race of old
 With ivy twine the head
 Of him they hailed their god of wine
 Thank God ! the lie is dead ;
 For ivy climbs the crumbling hall
 To decorate decay,
 And spreads its dark deceitful pall
 To hide what wastes away ;
 And wine will circle round the brain,
 As ivy o'er the brow,
 Till what could once see far as stars,
 Is dark as death's eye now.
 Then dash the cup down ! 'tis not worth
 A soul's great sacrifice :
 The wine will sink into the earth ;
 The soul, the soul—must rise.

CHARLES. A toast !

FREDERIC. Here's beauty's fairest flower,
 The maiden of our own birth-land !

HARRY. Pale face !—oh for one happy hour
 To hold my splendid Spaniard's hand !

FESTUS. Why differ on which is the fairest form,
 When all are the same the heart to warm ?
 Although by different charms they strike,
 Their power is equal and alike.
 Ye bigots of beauty ! behold I stand forth,
 And drink to the lovely all over the earth.
 Come, fill to the girl by the Tagus' waves !
 Wherever she lives there's a land of slaves.
 And here's to the Spaniard ! that warm blooming maid,
 With her step superb, and her black locks' braid.

To her of dear Paris ! with soul-spending glance,
 Whose feet, as she's sleeping, look dreaming a dance.
 To the Norman ! so noble, and stately and tall ;
 Whose charms, ever changing, can please as they pall ;
 Two bowls in a breath ! here's to each and to all !
 Come, fill to the English ; whose eloquent brow
 Says, pleasure is passing, but coming, and now ;
 Oh ! her eyes o'er the wine are like stars o'er the sea,
 And her face is the face of all heaven to me.
 And here's to the Scot ! with her deep blue eye,
 Like the far-off lochs 'neath her hill-propped sky.
 To her of the green isle ! whose tyrants deform
 The land, where she beams like the bow in the storm.
 To the maiden whose lip like a rose-leaf is curled,
 And her eye like the star-flag above it unfurled ;
 Here's to beauty, young beauty, all over the world !

WILL. Hurrah ! a glorious toast ;
 'Twould warm a ghost.

FESTUS. It moves not me. I cannot drink
 The toast I have given.

There !—Earth may pledge it, and she will
 Herself and her beauty to heaven.

Drink to the dead, youth's feelings vain .
 Drink to the heart, the battered wreck,
 Hurl'd from all passions' stormy main ;
 Though aye the billows o'er it break,
 The ruin rots, nor rides again.

CHARLES. Friend of my heart ! away with care,
 And sing, and dance, and laugh ;
 To love, and to the favourite fair,
 The wine-cup ever quaff.

Oh ! drink to the lovely ! or near, or far,
 Though fair as snow, as light ;
 For whether or falling or fixed the star,
 They both are heavenly bright.
 Out upon Care ! he shall not stay
 Within a heart like thine ;

There's nought in heaven or earth can weigh
 Down youth, and love, and wine.
 Then drink with the merry ! though we must die,
 Like beauty's tear we'll fall ;
 We have lived in the light of a loved one's eye,
 And to live, love, and die is all.

FESTUS. Vain is the world and all it boasts ;
 How brief love's, pleasure's, date !
 We turn the bowl, and all forget
 The bias of our fate.

CHARLES. We who have higher things to do,
 Might well-nigh feel ashamed
 Our faces in these founts to view.

FESTUS. Of conscience I, unblamed,
 The passing hour enjoy, with all

Delights that youthful hearts enthrall ;
 Enough to know that grief and care,
 Remorse, regret, will soon their share
 Of life assert.

CHARLES. Meantime, to loftier ends,
 I would mine own, and friends,
 Might timefully revert.
 High aims have we to gain ;
 Behoves us sure, refrain
 From follies such as these.

FESTUS. To-night it irks me not
 That fate to us allot
 Some passing hours that please.
 Ne'er can we all evade
 The future's saddening shade,
 Our own fate, nor the passed,
 With us, from first, forecast.

CHARLES. Some other I must try persuade.
 List, stranger guest. Within thine ear,
 One word, apart.

LUCIFER. We are private, now,
 Beside this fountain falling clear.

CHARLES. With aims so vast and bold which thou
 Hast for our friend, thou'lt scarce allow
 Others, I doubt, to interfere.
 But though, 'neath love's and beauty's spell,
 Youth lacks true wisdom's just control,
 Yet from our merry gatherings here
 Comes nought of evil to the soul.

LUCIFER. 'Tis more than thou, maybe, canst tell.

CHARLES. It means not. What I would with thee,
 Is to contrive with me, how best
 May he, our friend, the verity
 Of verities,—such through time confessed,
 The truth which men of every rite
 Have held in secretest delight—
 Acquire.

LUCIFER. I'll see to it some day ;
 And when my plans are fully laid
 Will ask your good advice, and aid
 In such designs as, need I say,
 Will smooth combinedly the way
 To ends each have in separate view
 For mutual good.

CHARLES. Agreed. Good friends, adieu !

LUCIFER. As proverbs say of every land, in time,
 A twig for that bird, too, I'll lime.

FESTUS. Stay, Charles : so rarely have we met
 Of late, from thee I fain would learn
 How speeds the scheme whereon thou hast set
 Thy heart, thy mind, life, sole concern.

CHARLES. With those whose life is given to aught

That claims a worthful kind, or end,
 How all beside appears but nought ;
 How little else can truth commend.
 Nor can I force myself to feel,
 'Twere rightly to have lived one day
 I've scored nought for the general weal,
 The world's great cause. If e'en the appeal
 Strike now an unawakened ear,
 Success may sometime crown the essay,
 And, with accordant voice, all here
 Help round our grandly vastening sphere.
 This night too, here, as everywhere,
 Where chance or choice my lot may lay,
 To all, ere each his homeward way
 Sought, I had made our scheme right clear,
 Which, should not all this hour who hear
 Justly conceive, truth still may hold
 The wisest league earth's annals e'er have told :
 Our holy conclave, oathed to free
 Man from false faith, and murderous swordlawry

FESTUS. Cause worthy, noble, it shows to me,
 Our ultimate times to liberate
 From deathly war, from patriot hate,
 And all the ills with these that mate,
 Prolific of life's evillest fate.
 Nor could they but be charmed to know
 The world-wide good for all in store.

CHARLES. And grant them shocked ; 'twere better so,
 Would each but lend his several weight
 To instruct, make pure, and elevate,
 The earth war-cursed, and ignorant evermore.
 List to our brethrens' sacred strain,
 Breathed in low tone through every clime ;
 Soon over mountain, sea and plain
 Resounding, till in the end of time,
 Man's wise and happy sanction it shall gain.

Earth is growing ! Lay your chains
 Tyrants, as ye list, or can ;
 Measurement of all your reigns
 Proves the greatening mind of man.
 O vainly lay ye load on him,
 Vainly rivet throne to throne ;
 Freedom, with a threatening groan,
 Shakes off her shackles, limb by limb.
 Earth is growing ! Chain the seas ;
 Chain the lightning, chain the wind.
 Nation now by nation frees,
 Frees itself in heart and mind.
 Behold the sovereign states expand,
 Law their strength, from hour to hour,
 Toil in quiet earns the power
 To do what justice may command.

Earth is growing ! Burst your bonds,
 Ye that bide in bigot fear ;
 Lo ! the world's belief responds
 To your Lord, all kind, all dear.
 The truth is peaceful ; man's great soul
 Daily mounts a mightier sphere ;
 Creeds are widening ; year by year,
 Fall off the bonds which faith control.
 Earth is growing ! Nations, ope
 Your arms to embrace your brother man ;
 Peace is now within your scope,
 Peace and plenty, Nature's plan.
 Fling aside all feud and hate
 Learn each other's life to love ;
 And truth, all other things above,
 With godliest virtue cultivate.
 Earth is growing ! future doom,
 Endless woe, of old conceived,
 Truth shall vanquish ; life to come
 Lovelier prove than love believed.
 Whose aim is godlike to be just ;
 To greaten with true hope life's whole,
 Is ours ; and helps man's heavenly soul
 To exalt, above his natal dust.
 Earth is growing ! Bound to march,
 Stand ye liberators forth ;
 Wide as Heaven's God-built arch,
 Freedom claims her rule on earth.
 O never may the Immortal rest,
 Never shall her triumph cease,
 Till, with justice, power and peace,
 Fair freedom home in every breast.
 Earth is growing ! Let the world
 Hail with joy the advancing time ;
 War shall into night be hurled ;
 Peace shall conquer every clime.
 One in faith, in virtue one,
 Man shall yet be good and great ;
 Nations form one only state ;
 Heir of earth, ascend thy throne.

FESTUS. It is enough.

CHARLES. Farewell.

FESTUS. The Dawn is here.

GEORGE. How goes the enemy ?

LUCIFER. What can he mean ?

FESTUS. He asks the hour.

LUCIFER. Aha ! then I

Advise, if Time thy foe hath been,

Be quick ; shake hands, man, with Eternity.

XX.

Graced by sweet promise plight on lunar plains,
 And 'gainst all ill armoured by spirit divine,
 Our seeker of soul's holy mysteries, lift
 By spiritual hand from earth's gross vanities ;
 From cruel lies of false creeds ; from all taint
 Of treason truthwards, which God's love most just
 Towards beings, create aye capable to advance
 By self amendment, would impugn, and fain
 The fountain of futurity to foretaste,
 Dares, angel-led, by God's behest, to trace
 Soul, in its reascendant course through all
 Heaven's spheres probational, of varied fates,
 Essential man, self purifying, must pass ;
 Views gradually perfectible life's vast whole ;
 Tells, joyful, wisdom's grand and gracious plan.

*A Lake-islet ; Lawn ; Garden ; Grove.—Mountains, Waterfall,
 and Mainland in the Distance.*

HELEN, MARIAN, STUDENT, *afterwards* FESTUS.

HELEN. Gone ? whither ?

STUDENT. Know not I. He and his friend
 Tramp earth untired, or rather seem on wing
 Trackless to travel, he, not unlikely even
 His steed sidereal steers where Cepheus sits
 Footing the pole ; or where the grim ore, long
 Death-stiffened into stoniest stars extends
 His spatial bulk, who once to engorge the sun
 Three days continuously his jaws stretched.

HELEN.

Peace !

I prithee, or we, like maxillary feat
 From thee, may have like cause to rue.

STUDENT.

I'm mute.

HELEN. Let me propitiate one who half, I fear,
 Distrusts my love. Dear Marian, hate me not.

MARIAN. Nay, I would love thee as of old. Cause none
 Have I to 'plain me of thee. With lighter heart
 How marvel that thou his love attracted more,
 His we both mind us of ? than mine, grief fraught,
 Of woe to all presageful ? If I change,
 'Twill be to one who changes not.

HELEN.

I know

Thy fine and eminent nature, nor believe
 Thou wouldst deign to conquer, more than court, the crowd ;
 As a sacred river, purified of earth,
 Albeit bepraised, beprayed, encrowned with flowers,
 Ingratiate even by living sacrifice,
 Scarce noting its own bounties ripples along,
 Reckless of adoration most, so thou,
 Calm in life's onflow, towards its endless end.

STUDENT. Good, were life being only ; but to know
 To act, with some, seems scarce less than to be.

HELEN. True, 'tis with me a passion all to learn
 Sainted in sacred song of eld, or proved
 By science now ; but fear, too much, to attain.

MARIAN. And when attained, how cheerless !

HELEN.

Say not so.

To fill the soul with knowledge hidden and high
 I would brave death this night. Maid, dame of old
 Partook all mysteries with the crownèd crowd
 Of happy initiates. We yet—

MARIAN.

See, yon skiff

Nearing the shore, makes, with recursant wing,
 Surely, some sign recognizant.

STUDENT.

Wait. But how

Unless we forcibly and of purpose raise
 O'er life's low meannesses the mind, shall we
 Fit us for loftier being, powers more intense
 Of soul, and mental act ; how brook the laws
 Compressed into necessities which both rule
 And serve the spirit world, we hardily trust
 To view, nay sometime gain ? To reach and grasp
 Mind's rational solidity, to construe
 The equivocal oracles of life, our frames
 With lives extern conjoined, our spirits with God,
 Perplexes most, the clearest.

MARIAN.

Dark howe'er

Time now, like ocean's broadblazed rim of light
 Mid-heaven by clouds o'erpent, the future glows
 With glory.

HELEN.

It may. To me, creation's passed,
 Thought's ray re-scaled towards light, howe'er far back,
 Seems, than the nearest future, less remote.

MARIAN.

See now, it is no stranger. Yes, we all,
 I think, that footstep welcome, Festus, thine.

STUDENT.

It is he, not undesired. The time draws nigh
 For our most cherished projects wide to spread
 Their world roots, ramifying, of vastest change.
 Thy presence was well due.

FESTUS.

I knew it. This

Fair company, one eve at least, shall well
 Compensate us for time devote to ends
 Eyed sternlier. Yes, it glads me still to meet
 Dear Marian, and thee Helen always.

HELEN.

But thou !

Whence com'st thou ? We were wondering whether earth
 Held thee, or some more brilliant sphere had lured.

FESTUS.

Too wondrous and too various charms are earth's,
 For other star to stay me long. But now
 Let me not serious converse hinder. While
 My foot, this fair pavilion's shadow touched
 Entering, I heard in musical challenge charged
 Of passed o'er all the future : nearer, more
 Momentous, was't.

HELEN. 'Twas mine. Soul's link with God
Shows clearlier in its rise than end. Nor seems
The reason of soul's continuance, of like weight
With that of primal being.

FESTUS. Seems not? I've seen.

HELEN. Nay, let us know. Thy strange friend's stranger creed
Though simple, of death and God, sufficed not thee?

FESTUS. It could not.

HELEN. Oft I think of earth being made ;
And here, throned solitary, and face to face,
With the broad universe, I can dream I see
God's very primal act, when earth first showed,
In sudden answer to his thought. Here heaped he
Green hillocks gently uprearing like young colts,
Playful in sunny pastures ; mountains, there,
Like hoary spectres in the fabulous glass
Of world-famed wizard, eyed their shadowy shapes
Slow lengthening in the lake, nor guessed how high
Their predeterminate heads would rise, but rose
Responsive, stilly, to his rational word
First uttered then, commensurative of form
Fairest, most high ; here, echoing rock and crag,
There, the wild waste, voiced with articulate falls,
And winds, all variable of tone :—there, see
In yon disrupted cone the visible stress
Of his vast all-mastering hand ;—by bloomy meads
Blue streams he drew life-teeming, lakes like this,
With baby Edens isled ; traced out the bounds
Of nations, radiate from their shelving shores ;
Parted earth's hemispheres ; round land the seas
Sateless, unsociable as death, rolled ; last,
Savage and sacred in all innocence, man
Sowed broad-cast o'er his fields, he, sole.

STUDENT. Nor I
Think otherwise, albeit there are who hold
Unmade, self-made, this world, or made by hands
Of angels, 'mongst whose thrust the devil his own,
So questionable seem some things in their cause,
Their end, their workings. Why are scorpions, snakes,
And poison flowers ?

MARIAN. Be glad we are bid, forewarned,
Not all things inexplicit, to reject.

FESTUS. It was God from the beginning framed the whole,
Earth, heaven, and into being the angels breathed.

HELEN. This, and that all souls made, him reverence owe
For their existence, thanks for life, and hope,
We, duteous, learn from priest and primer ; learn
Faith's sacredest traditions, gratefully,
Of life to come ; but what's their sum ? I'd know
O'er all things, this : how mind's survivable strength
To its elements resublimed, loosed from this build
Organic, lives, acts ; how it is soul subsists

Separate ; how this that influences, works out
 Its kind, here inchoate, in loftier states
 Of being. Not all mankind are heroes, saints
 Nor predicable angels. Are then the worlds
 Peopled by pure intelligences, with one
 Sole, fixed idea ; one changeless habit ; one
 Act, mental and eternal ? May not some
 Fall back even in existence, to low ranks
 And lower still ?

FESTUS. Progress is life's great law ;
 And expiatory penitence if a state
 Timely retardant is of higher growth
 The root. Some late experiences of mine
 Would please you, doubt I not, to hear.

STUDENT. We all
 Long much to hear. Not given up all to gold,
 Nor merely frivolous, now thou knowst me, not
 To lore mysterious only given, if far
 From gabble of popular creeds, in one ear droned
 By science, in the other by sheer ignorance.
 The masses too, I'd serve, and loyally ;
 And serve them most by ruling them.

HELEN. And I,
 All natures I would know ; with all I feel
 Compassionately ; in every generous aim
 Join ; prize each pure design art, science, owns
 As elevative of mind ; all projects faith,
 Though secularized, can prove of likely good
 I love ; would further ; pray for.

STUDENT. Make us free
 Therefore of these pure mysteries of true life
 To come, authentic, spiritual, as I thee
 Have helped to learn those truths sublime, chief lights
 The passed from all her firmament holds towards us,
 Of sensible use, soul-gladdening.

FESTUS. Not in vain
 Shall any truthwards tending, self impelled
 Towards wisdom, test of earnest heart, from me
 Ask glorious knowledge, most of all ye, who
 With me, like meditant on fates coming, now
 Upon mine assured experience shall believe
 Soul aye regenerate, progressive, all time
 Self sifted upwards ; which transmuting fires
 Spiritual, intelligible pass through that make fit
 For states more eminent than their last, till each
 Achieve perfection ; each in order due.

MARIAN. That every soul, by penitence hath power
 To raise itself to bliss, were joy to know.

HELEN. Sit, let us hear. This verdurous dell flower rimmed
 Like a green bowl o'errunning at the brim,
 In blooms ; yon woods thick darkening, where of old
 Lean solitary bark-clad, his soul from sins

Of pomp, from luxury, his heart, assailed,
 Prayerwise ; and knight by faintest footsteps, tracked
 To the hermit's cell his love lorn fair ; still stream,
 And sultry sky, all suit. Yon mountain, draped
 To the foot, in purple mists, whereto the clouds,
 Their awful gift, as to an altar, bring
 Of thunder sealed, seems hearkening ; we, with ear
 To nature's melodies tuned, the vesper chant
 Of birds in bosmy brake ; the solemn lapse
 Of yon white waterfall just seen, just heard ;
 And most one voice, if with the silvery tone
 Resonant of stars, not I should wonder,—wait,
 All harmonising.

MARIAN. We listen.

STUDENT. Soul oppressed
 With sense of high experiences, so all
 Transcendant, well may pause. For who feels not,
 Eyeing as we now heaven's expanse, and this,
 Accomplished daylight, lit by one, Hope's star,
 A sense in him of like infinity, fill
 His being, and speak of equal future ?

FESTUS. Yes.

Who in clear midnight's starry hush shall stand,
 On high and heathery peak o'erpeering sea and land ;
 The ocean glassed immensity of sky
 Wooing the spirit to inspect its near futurity ;
 Or who when spring's faint crescent in the skies
 Folds to her breast her burthening world of mysteries,
 Pacing some gardened height or tomb-towned hill,
 A capital at his feet, moon-haunted, noiseless, chill ;
 Ponders those holiest shades earth still reveres,
 That have earned each one his star ; 'mid yon soul-ripening
 spheres,

The heavenly state perceptible, powers may feel
 In him expanding, vie with all the heavens reveal ;
 Mind's vast innate capacities, which thus
 Bind in one common chain the world, our God, and us.
 While lowly faith unfalteringly refers
 To treasures keyless knowledge vainly vaunts as hers ;
 Man still with decent pride may claim to trace
 The grounds whereon his rule of all things God doth base ;
 Whose justice is our justice, and whose powers,
 His infinite, love and truth, are attributes of ours ;
 With whom we have communion, and enjoy,
 Through rational light, what age nor death can e'er destroy ;
 For soul, with Deity consubstantial, feels
 All nature does or bears, each mystery fate conceals ;
 Which, though it wind a thousand different ways,
 Points ultimately towards God, 'midst of all being's maze.
 If in yon boundless vault we therefore see
 Proofs of an all adapting, governing, Deity ;
 Gracious in heart, and bounteous ; greatening man

With sacred gifts to enjoy, and glory in, all he can ;
 Ourselves even here, considerate of times passed,
 And future, from earth's prime heroical to her last ;
 May, communing with all, unblamed, conceive
 What godlike ghosts of all shall joy in, or achieve ;
 May, justly speculative, man's coming state,
 With heaven's most perfect gifts, to him, while earth's, collate ;
 And meditating the great and reverend names,
 Time's luminous roll within its world-wide margin claims.
 Deem how perchance their spirits, in spheres refined,
 Walk kingly, self-subject ; or, with excursive mind,
 Where some felicitous sun serenely reigns,
 Lead large æthereal lives 'mid paradisaal plains.
 I, musing thus, fair Luniel from her sphere
 Collucent, which completes twelve times its monthly year
 In ours, with the sun conjoined, and yet once more ;
 'Lighted on spiry crag, riven from the rocky shore,
 Saw sudden stand before me ; all her charms
 By her own light chastened, stand ; with welcome waving arms.
 For this with spirit friends ; one ageful hour
 Brings to perfection fruit earth scarce had riped to flower.
 She, skilled my bosom's inmost thought to tell,
 Called, questioning, "Wouldst thou where those spirits thou deem'st
 of, dwell ?"

"Gladly," I answered, "Angel ! would I wend
 The world throughout with thee, searching from end to end
 The bounds of being." "Wouldst thou life's issues trace
 'Tween God and Nature lawed ?" she said, "To man's vast race,
 Earth's mediatised divinity, and learn
 By how steep gradients soul may still to heaven return ?"
 "Lieber than aught on earth," I answered. "Lo !"
 Said Luniel then, "what thou from him wouldst never know,
 Who tempts thy heart with boons of feebler worth,
 I am from God empowered to show thee, son of earth.
 Remember thou no more when once are known
 These mysteries of the world progressive round God's throne,
 Canst stoop to trifle with life's vanities, now
 Henceforth abjured to be ?" "I solemnize the vow,"
 Said I. Each silent knelt. "In times to be,
 Full soon," said Luniel, "thou perchance mayst fitly see
 This vow to mind ; and, alway, to recall
 The promise plight." "Forbear the future to forestall,"
 Said I, disgracious. "Shun, then, soul of light !
 Shun passion's pits obscure, whose depths bemock the sight,
 And for that I, who hold thee free to take,
 Or to refuse, the boon I offer for thy sake,
 Nor would one hour enforce the divine will
 Under pretext of fate, his word made to fulfil,
 Would war 'gainst self-love only, which would bind,
 Even in hallowing bonds, free choice of other's mind."
 "O heavenly spirit," I said, "O taught of heaven,
 Tears more than dew-drops I would weep were to me given

Much to fore-know. But I abide the event."
 It is well, said the Angel; fate befriends the reticent.
 Now mainland-ward the rift she crossed between
 Our rocks, in ebon shade half, half in argent sheen,
 Saying, "Eye well yon starry arch on high,
 Wherein the eternal scales of justice cope the sky.
 Lo! there the lists of trial; there the fields
 Of triumph, God to souls in good persistent, yields.
 Thousands of years, souls preëxistent may,
 In line with laws celestial, take earth's downward way;
 Who take, death-freed, the ascent towards heavenly life,
 Through tests perfective, tests wherewith all worlds are rife,
 Are blessed; and these it is mine to mix with; mine
 To encourage, to sanctify, in striving for divine
 Communion; and the spirit elect prepare
 Heaven's feast intelligible, boundless, of truth to share."
 "All this," said I, "I burn to learn; my breath
 Seems worthless, all not known, even parenthetic death."
 Tranced while I stood thus 'neath her fixed eye,
 My spirit stole softly forth towards hers, as midst the sky
 Steals forth a starlet in the gloaming, none
 Wist how, "Behold me, I; space hungering to be gone.
 So clear, so penetrant, so pervasive, grew
 Her luminous presence there, that, him except, who knew
 Her orb's vast absence in the depths of space,
 One might have deemed such light forth issuant from its face.
 "Rise," said the Angel, flashing forth her hand,
 Which, touchless, mine sustained, as doth the invisible band
 Betwixt the aerial fish stretched, both uphold.
 Swifter than happiest hours winged we, where meteors rolled;
 Passed blank vacuity, passed where air most thin
 Nought leaves for light's relays to range or revel in,
 Far, as in space, morn's first faint beamlets shine,
 From those still steepes of heaven where evening's shade decline,
 Rose we, each breath; and ere the sunken sun,
 Gloomed by earth's westward limb, our mounting eye might shun
 One glimpse we caught, our last, of the sea-flood broad,
 Edged with extremest light, like the hem of the garment of God;
 Passed all the erratic spheres where penitent kings,
 'Mid soul-crowds, conscience touched, all grades, all shades, of
 things,
 Terrestrial, sensual, sinful, learn to eschew;
 Here, grouped for mutual strength, here sparse, a loftier few;
 But each their elvance to the all pure most high,
 Outworking; passed the solar orb, which drawing nigh
 "If," Luniel said, "thy questioning eye, aright
 I read, thou wouldst know why we, so near, the source of light
 Avoid?" "I would." "Not thus, may we the sphere
 Accost, which rules, know thou, time's great celestial year,
 Not yet, the mighty spirit who there controls,
 Loyal alway to Heaven, the group which round him rolls,
 Of various worlds, even thine; and not by way

Of passing guest, but bound on some supreme essay ;
 Not now ; the day is kalendared on high,
 Both shall ; and there, surprised to find thee, thither hie
 One other ; passed all orbs' sun-circling speed,
 Where the equidialled points no further may recede ;
 And the whole space our petty system spanned,
 Showed like the scattered nest of ostrich in the sand.
 Still soaring in wide circlelets towards the sign,
 The sun's bright gates, so called by the angelhood benign
 Of these æthereal regions, coped by stars ;
 The jambs of those vast ports, nought mean nor mortal mars,
 We, hailing, touch ; heaven's holy angel guard,
 Us answering, spake and said, thus proving watch and ward,
 ' Queen of the Night ! whatever fate thee brings
 Unwont, be welcome still ; thy silvery shadowing wings
 Part hiding, somewhat show, as on thy breast
 Incumbent, which hath quelled thine interlunar rest.'
 Said Luniel, " Well it is, whate'er God's will,
 Each should his ought discharge, his primary due fulfil.
 Know then, that I who, heaven-deputed, range
 These wonted space-realms, come, charged to let interchange
 Notes of all life, all being, among these spheres,
 By the earth-born mortal who beneath this wing appears ;
 And who, it was long fore-written in rolls of fate,
 Premundane, long ere light the void might animate ;
 Some genius of the stars his hand should seize,
 And guide complacent through the untold eternities ;
 And whom, precognizant of the aspiring soul
 I, from mine own bright orb, would oft on earth control."
 " Seems he to hold the seeds within his breast
 Of citizenship eterne, heaven's franchise prepossessed."
 " Though erring, though imperfect, he the claim
 Of brotherhood owns, to aid all who the Eternal's name
 Trust ; who on right's success o'er wrong rely ;
 O'er evil, good's ; and soul's last rest in God, on high ;
 On virtue's world-wide triumph ; truth's increase ;
 Heaven's doom, humane and just ; and earth's perpetual peace.
 " Continue," said that world-ward, soul benign ;
 " What nobler man can do, man's spirit can scarce divine."
 We, urging thence our way, the adits vast,
 Repellent, hollow, mark, now entered, and now passed
 Of those sidereal realms which Luniel knew
 So well, and I so longed but to conceive as true ;
 The abodes of life e'er brightening, where earth's souls,
 Their sterner fates consumed, scale the bright ring which rolls
 Soul clarifying, through heaven ; and which to ascend
 As bidden by holiest word, our spirits we now commend ;
 Intent to aid the aspirant mind, from earth
 And bodily bondage freed, into a loftier birth.
 While poised now on the belted clouds we stood,
 Of a giant sun, and all its marks, its movements, viewed ;
 " Boundless as are God's works in all these spheres,

One mediate spirit," I said, "manlike throughout appears ;
 With whom I see, commingling free, the soul
 Humane, now learns to obey, now teaches to control ;
 Thy word in all confirmed, which first I learned,
 In yon orb, hence with earth, as double star discerned ! "
 " Worlds variable and changeful," spake my guide,
 Meet for terrestrial spirits are found, sin-purified,
 Self-shriven. Who certain bliss, bliss-sealed, have gained,
 Bide in yon highmost suns, unaltering, unconstrained.
 All, planets, satellites, spheres, but as a base
 Serve for the greatening powers of man's divinized race ;
 Imperfect, but aspiring through all time,
 Up to the highest heaven ambition's star may climb.
 For, as a lightning thought, a glint o' the eye,
 Will fruit through dreams into a life's eternity,
 So all mind's varied faculties which now
 Nor time's demands nor bodily needs due scope allow
 Shall, 'neath God's hallowing eye matured, expand,
 Those happiest ends to attain he from all time hath planned ;
 And sanctify the simplest soul, their shrine,
 Brightening from world to world, through every sacred sign.
 Fleet, but as drowning thought which crowds all time
 Into one instant's act from now to Nature's prime ;
 Swifter than spear spear seconds of the light
 Polar, which archwise crowns our earth-sphere's arctic night,
 My guide in God I following, we from sign
 Soaring to sign, first light where night and day combine,
 In equal shares, His righteousness to show,
 Whose equity rules all worlds in Heaven, as earth below.
 So symbolled to creation by yon scales,
 Inskied on high, whose poise sin vainly countervails.
 Here, 'midst a bright celestial group we stood
 High 'mongst star-magnates, first of the solar brotherhood,
 Where astral spirits, in long progression tried,
 Upon perfection's path, well nigh so deified ;
 With variant angel tribes in ordered grades
 Of social mind, I marked, God's law e'er forms or aids.
 Here, Solon, prince of the proverbial seven,
 Heads his constellate seers, the lawgivers, whose heaven
 It is to interpret God's divine decrees
 To worlds his justice binds, to souls his mercy frees.
 Manou, there, Konfutsze, new codes dictate
 Of equity, and between vexed orblets arbitrate ;
 For worlds may in thought each other wrong, as ours
 Far spheres, with doubt that them God fills with sentient powers,
 But leaves their home in space, a soulless blank,
 Mindless their own to enjoy, and reasonless to thank.
 Here, Minos lord of those who, east and west,
 Soul continents judged of old, presides as justice' best
 Interpreter, in all things true, but named
 Descent from fabulous gods, and for all virtues famed,
 Earth owns ; and, with him, Numa, laws decree,

Faiths, morals, rights, that now with truth alone agree,
 Humanity, and pure right. Zaleucus, there,
 Fresh laws like those which even while drawing earthly aï
 He knew of God, prepares ; and justice proves
 One with the beauteous spirit which all things makes and moves.
 Lycurgus, here, his soul realm arms ; and trains
 The militant spirit to live on good alone it gains
 Victorious, from each vanquished vice ; and life,
 From luxury freed, ordains, with sin unceasing strife.
 Pythagoras, there, convokes with potent sign
 Of discipline perfect, pure societies, proved divine
 By silent concord ; love of mental light,
 And aim to serve by good, the all good infinite.
 There, Plato's soul full orb'd, the good, the true,
 Enjoys, the absolute fair ; there, labouring to renew
 Some holier commonwealth, a crown obtains
 Kingly, in the very stars where Justice banished, reigns,
 God's delegate. Here, too, pointing to the scroll
 Where prime of men, the words, immortal is man's soul,
 He penned, and where its first and starry state
 Viewing restored, he dared inspired to predicate,
 Not without leave divine, the gladdening throng
 His sacred hand salute ; him hailed in grateful song,
 Noblest of men. Euhemerus, here, there, More,
 Found in Eutopian worlds the states they feigned before ;
 Here, Omar, God's great unity end and cause
 Boasts of one conquering faith, sole base of rights, dues, laws,
 Here, Zenghis, here, Akhbar, God law proclaim ;
 Fuse and imblend all faiths 'neath one all conquering name.
 Meet, Ælfrid, Ina here, kingwise arrayed ;
 State-rules, and codes confer ; and now, a mightier shade,
 Self-crowned, and matched with great Justinian's fame,
 These orbs with heartiest trust, welcome, and shrewd acclaim,
 Who conquering first all vanquished, then his realm
 Inmost bequeathed of law ; force none could overwhelm.
 Here, he who first the state's true form conceived,
 Wisdom, wealth, numbers (these by their chosen), all inweaved
 Into one whole ; and dared so concentrate
 Men's energies as to make a land into a state,
 Which should forget not others, and their good,
 But, slavery's chain broke, hold all freemen of one blood ;
 By patriots circled of all times, now plans
 With them, all polity proved to accord with spiritual man's.
 Papinian, Ulpian, Scaevola, here, unite
 To assure the spirit severe of its prescriptive right
 To freeëst choice, as fits intelligence,
 Of Deity sired, and heired with conscience, reason, sense
 Of citizenship on high, the heavenly state,
 All conquering, freeing all ; intangible, even, of fate.
 And now through soundless space, windlike through light,
 Successive bars we pierced and passed of day and night ;

The way combust, which, from the sacred seats
 Of legislature, to worlds where warrior warrior meets,
 Leads, where the glowing sphereclets of the sign
 Sequent, we resting prove now wrongly deemed malign.
 "Herein," said Luniel, "view to whom heaven's lord
 The privileges of power, soul dominance, doth accord.
 Here in, elevated, inspired, and purified,
 By conscience, man's inventive mind, so closely allied
 To God's creative spirit, revises, mends
 Its projects, and passed feats remoulds to worthier ends.
 So here, all features of man's personal mind,
 Made beauteous, magnified, and meliorate we find.
 Kings, patriots, heroes, here, and potentates,
 Found empires day-broad, march to achieve supremest fates ;
 Here, conquerors haste with armies of the light,
 The cloud-topped towers to o'erturn of evil's tyrant might ;
 Wage truceless war 'gainst cruelty, and advance
 Their fiery hosts to invade thy realms, black Ignorance ;
 To invade and free ; not basely subjugate,
 For their own selfish ends, the bond they liberate.
 There, just usurpers humiliate, dethrone
 Huge errors that devour souls ; sins demoniac grown
 By pamperings unrestrained ; demurest vice
 Idolatrous ; and false faiths that souls from God entice.
 Look, and well weigh, what time thou wilt ; this hour
 Give I to thee." I looked, and grateful blessed the Power.
 Nimrod, here, haughty now no more, unless
 Gainst pride, pursued, we viewed, through the obscure wilderness,
 Of worldly life, almost like this of ours,
 Monsters, but now of sin, and so to virtuous powers
 Self-thralled, that fearing most, fair freedom's frown,
 He flings in Hadean deeps his loved star-patterned crown.
 Sesostriis, there, war's patriarch, seeks his place
 Lowliest 'mong kings, with joy, captive of conquering grace.
 Here, violated states and murdered kings
 Navé's stern son now counts vilest ; counts worst of things,
 Kingdoms to seize by force, strongholds or lands,
 For other ends than right or self defence commands ;
 Sacked cities ; and such wrongs to cause to cease,
 Leads he God's chosen hosts, to victories won of peace
 Persuadent ; which nor woe nor wound e'er leave ;
 No hate burned heart for theft of throne or state to grieve ;
 Nor deems now God, the all-pitying, could dictate
 Horrors that merciless fiends would shrink to perpetrate ;
 But, foe to all false gods and idol sins,
 Arms his elect with powers omnipotent to convince,
 And with heaven's saving help 'mong those who have erred,
 Makes for his chosen, way by one conversive word,
 Miraculous. Cyrus, there, of life assured
 Deathless, forenamed of God, by carnal bribe unlured,
 Vast tracts subdues, huge zones, of doubt and sin
 The infinite of defect we feel our souls within ;

The immortal life he credited while on earth
 He here enjoys, of innocence loved, and faithful worth.
 Here Xerxes to his will all elements binds
 Serve they but plans to enlarge, or to enlighten minds.
 The youth Pellæan, here, who at Babel died,
 And since through many a sphere hath expiated his pride,
 For spirits in every rank defectible made,
 Gain but through time and test and proof, perfection's grade ;
 Seeks now, in virtue's cause, new worlds to win,
 That he may aid to assoil from soul debauching sin.
 Here, too, Assyria's last of tyrants, taught
 Wisdom from just revolt for ills by luxury wrought,
 Salutes the rebel friend, as right to assay
 His rule, his fate, who built two cities in one day ;
 Yet lost his life through idling 'mong slave-queens ;
 The ambition now of each, blessed, both in ends and means ;
 His who loved peace, but now with active aim ;
 His, who risked death for right ; true patriot's proudest claim ;
 There, Bayazet and Timur rush to embrace
 Mutual, and every cause of enmity to efface,
 As subjects each of other, strive to extend
 Art's empire, learning's, faith's, true brother, and true friend.
 Alaric here his lightning legions leads
 Of virtuous spirits 'gainst vice ; the sphere o'erruns ; nor dreads
 To attack the dominant sins that e'er have ruled
 Earth-life, intemperance, pride, attacks, subdues ; self-schooled.
 Here, Brutus, Cæsar, there, firm friends enrolled ;
 Born social order this, that, sense of rights to uphold,
 With Pericles now unite, and Charlemagne,
 Soul freedom and states' peace imperial to maintain ;
 Shadow of peace celestial, which attends
 Always perfected power ; peace, which all crowns and ends.
 Swiftlier through shining æther than the ray
 Darts forth of boreal morn, we spirits our spacious way
 Seize, till we 'light amidst his lustrous reign,
 Who deathless life abjured such star-life but to gain,
 And worlds where spirits acute, of keenest cast,
 And lowliest wisdom life in love and worship passed.
 "Start not," said Luniel, "in this gracious land,
 Where wider ends than earth's, and loftier heavens expand,
 Time's grandest, holiest, worthiest souls, to view,
 Still speculative of truths that variously the true
 Invariable, concern ; (for not alone
 Does certainty all suffice ; man's spirit adores the unknown ;)
 Nor paradise deem to one scant spot confined ;
 But walled once, now world-wide, spreads various as man's mind
 As bidden, I look ; and every soul-king see,
 Like level suns aglow with glad solemnity.
 There, Verulam's spirit, from Nature's upmost height,
 Serves, ministrant with herself, the lowliness infinite ;
 The immeasurable humility which filled
 The world creative mind, when man to make He willed ;

Wisdom all potent, preaches ; and proclaims
 Omniscience crown of all the Self-Existent's names ;
 Knowledge applied, is power ; not knowledge void
 Of act, he adds ; and good, when but for good employed.
 Great Albert and Erigena truths exchange
 Current 'mong gods ; with reach half heavenly prearrange
 The philosophic schools of youthening spheres.
 Fire-sainted Bruno, there, freed now from ignorant fears
 Of blind fanatic priests, who shamed the creed
 They vainly mouthed, affirms God all in thought and deed ;
 The world an emanation of his mind ;
 And man's free spirit in God dilate, not undefined.
 The shade Cartesian, here, with thought supreme
 Pregnant, still broods on Being's one all comprising theme,
 Still seeks of every spirit from stranger star
 The inborn truth all hold, " because God is, we are."
 Malebranche, his quest for truth, there, aye renews ;
 And verifies, but in God, the vision he pursues ;
 In him, the sovereign truth, the essential whole,
 Sees all things through the mean of the universal Soul.
 Here, Berkeley's genius quickening all his dreams,
 In sense supernal blends what is with all that seems ;
 And showing naked mind the synonym
 Of all perfections makes it God, or equals him ;
 Mind, and mind's acts, the base of all things ; sense
 Time, science, matter, space, cause of the whole immense.
 Here, blessed Spinoza's spirit, as heaven sublime,
 In God finds all extent, all thought, all place, all time ;
 But otherwise than on earth he deemed ; not these
 With Deity one and same, he now enlightened sees ;
 Nor, inferentially, 'mong things finite,
 The spiritual God with vice confused, and wrong with right ;
 But as a skiff, wind driven 'gainst stream, to mount,
 Flies, filled with breath divine, to truth's eternal fount.
 Clarke's soul triumphant, here, to all create
 God's unity, central truth, inspired to demonstrate,
 On high, persists adoringly to prove
 Him through all attributes one, the world—constructive love.
 Fore-tuned on earth, there, Leibnitz' spirit still hears
 The harmonies of mental mixed with material spheres,
 Sees the sufficing reason of the whole
 In that beneficent will that makes, guides, owns, the soul,
 With all perfections filled of their due grade,
 Not absolute like to God's, but congruous with mind made ;
 And hails, with righteous and regenerate zest,
 The eternal heavens as still most perfect, happiest, best.
 Ah ! paint who can, the sweet and rapturous fire
 Which thrills the praiseful souls of that God hallowing choir.
 Locke, here, and analytic Kant, man's mind,
 Though limited by defect yet virtually undefined,
 Search with deliberate piety, test, compare
 With demons, angels, or intelligences more rare ;

Nor fixedness find in creatural knowledge ; nought
 Certain in scope or grasp of man's most serious thought,
 Save, base and sum of purest reason, this ;
 God only is true being, and being, true, only, bliss.
 There, the great Swede, ascetic seer, God graced,
 With conscious speech of spirit, acts, monitor wise, so placed
 That conversant whilst with deathless minds afar.
 He scrutinizes all souls, from earth's sea-glittering star,
 Launched hourly, fore-ordained to segregate
 All spirits whose lot is lawed by their interior state,
 Each to its self-judged circle of joy or pain ;
 For just proportion e'er, through heaven as earth, must reign,
 And correlate spheres agree ; with patient zeal
 Proving to each whence flowed life's sequent woe or weal,
 He, with poetic justice, which is God's,
 Deals to the pure, palms, peace ; deals to the unrighteous, rods.
 Here, they who followed once the chase on earth,
 Yield now their souls to aims of truer, weightier, worth ;
 Not now the shades of hapless beasts pursue ;
 But faults and errors haste to exterminate from the view
 Of spirits susceptible of some meaner end
 Than nature points as best, or virtue might commend.
 Swift as the lord of light's resurgent ray
 Shoots o'er expectant earth the warm delights of day ;
 Instant as flies man's thought from earth to heaven,
 When, peace imploring, God his pardoning grace hath given,
 To penitent soul, a world we make whence streamed
 Light soothing, strengthening light, the gates of Heaven it seemed ;
 Here, those who on earth would draw from darkest mine
 The gold that witches man, or gems that brightest shine
 Seek now for truths enlightening, truths arcane,
 Thought-gems, his brow to illumine who worthiest still shall reign
 In lowliest tasks for others' weal, to seek
 Power which makes rich the poor, and wealth which kings the
 weak.

Lo ! here the pious priests of every creed,
 Who the Pure one served, and pure themselves would intercede,
 For man, as race, as people, as tribe, as soul.
 "No fanes here," Luniel said ; "all heaven one temple whole."
 "Nor more need we, dear Spirit," said I, "below ;
 Were purity but a plant, earth freelier learned to grow.
 For not in priestly vestments, brodered bright,
 And various as the hues wherewith rich autumn dight,
 Blazons inbred decadence ; not in pile
 Of plate, nor treasurous chests ; high arch, nor dim-roofed aisle ;
 Nor victim crowned with flowers, whose fragrant breath
 Blends with his last low moan in commonalty of death,
 Lies our acceptableness, nor ever lay :
 'Tis to man's spirit and heart God sole regard doth pay.
 The prayer inspired's prayer granted. This alone
 Know we ; we give thee thine ; thou tak'st but that's thine own.
 Nor can our limited foresight swerve thee, Lord,

Nor wanderings, from aught planned, or penned, in fate's record.
 Nought can we lend thee, Lord ! that's first not thine ;
 Nought add by deed to thy felicitousness divine,
 Save this ; to serve our fellow men ; who thus
 Serve man, serve God. Nought less, 'tis all he asks from us,"
 Said Luniel, " hour hour urgeth. Ears and eyes
 More than lips use." Abashed, I strove for silence' prize.
 Towering 'mid saintliest throngs from every clime.
 From all spheres called, from the midst, the end, the birth, of time,
 Great Origen here I viewed, and heard rehearse
 God's love, sire, saviour, soul of the rational universe.
 No longer heretic deemed, to all he proves
 That all God makes for good, essentially, he loves ;
 If erring, pities ; and, while worlds endure,
 Awaits their reasonable assent to just and pure
 Service of truth ; in charity, sage, now sees
 Secured, the first fruits there, of God's great victories
 O'er rebel evil, through convincing grace
 Which, infinite, must at last all finite foes efface.
 There, Anius, Melchizedek, in one rite
 Of thanks to God most highest, the infin'te one, unite ;
 In spiritual faith now oned, their simple creed
 Confess, sufficing men, and all that angels need.
 Here, Miriam, Deborah and the matron sage
 Lætitia like inspired, to teach a later age,
 Read, writ in nobler spheres, the Eternal's name
 Irradiating all skies, the one the sole, the same ;
 The name on earth most honoured, first in heaven,
 Known all where, His to whom all love, all praise, be given.
 Theano, here, Sibyl, and holy maid,
 Virgin of sun, or moon, in dazzling forms arrayed ;
 Their crowns inscrutable with sublime device,
 And garlands wove from flowers fadeless of paradise ;
 Serve now the Fatherly Spirit, whose every beam
 Is lifelight to the soul, inspired by love supreme.
 "So spiritual," said Luniel, " all things here,
 That many a sight thou seest more strange may seem than clear ;
 But know, wherever the divine desire
 Of good burns ; heart-born flame conceived of heavenly fire ;
 Where'er celestial youth may yet be taught
 Wisdom, or deeds devout of virtuous valour wrought ;
 Where purity of thought may yet be instilled,
 Or breast with high resolves, beneficent, be fulfilled ;
 A longing like intense to assure mankind
 Some moral boon ; or save from fall some doubt-poised mind ;
 Where holy unsuccess, sustaining grace
 May ask, receive ; there view, be sure, each angel face,
 In-beaming strength ; there, every holy muse,
 Her art now hallowed, learns through all spheres to diffuse.
 For God all various beings both can make,
 And sanctifying can bless, for his dear creature's sake ;
 For their sake, no one's else ; their food, their life,

Their soul's unbounded peace, with hope celestial rife.
 Of fleshly gods, of man-made idol's meed,
 Of intercessory saints 'tween sire and son, what need?
 Sole to himself, from all that He creates,
 Angel or man, the appeal, the Eternal consecrates."
 "Kindly as God may act, I said, to one
 The spirit elect, unjust can justice be to none.
 This, favoured by priority and degree;
 Of bliss; yet all at last shall taste his clemency."
 Quick as the leap thou gav'st, obedient light!
 In response to the word of God's omnific might,
 Through many an interstellar space, thought-winged
 Glide we, where broods of nebulous stars their sires enringed;
 Heat lavishing these, those elemental light
 Hoarding, ere on the void, though eager, loosed for flight;
 To orbs where dominate strange new forms of truth;
 Where age heart-ripening melts in soul-perfective youth;
 Where demi-gods of science faith befriend;
 And seek, their theories proved, God's purpose to commend;
 Tracing in Him not mists, not mites, the rise
 Of man's life and the world's, lost in archaic skies.
 With the Phœnician priest, here, deep discourse
 On Chaos, vital winds, and nature's plasmal force
 Holds Thales; here, his crude imaginings
 On mundane forces mends, and primal seeds of things;
 Here, Euclid his indevious problems frames
 For nascent orbs, and proves, by space-drawn diagrams,
 Truths spiritual, eterne; of import vast
 More even than all, not slight, time 'neath his name hath massed;
 There, Meton, through recurrent cycles, trains
 Star-spirits to union, earth's scarce yet with Heaven's attains,
 Though urged through many an age. The golden prime
 Was before gold was known; when all the souls of time
 Reunion sought with God, the spiritual sun
 Of Heaven's eternal whole, world-hallowing one by one,
 The starry hosts, how joyed. The Assyrian seer
 Nameless, who named the stars, pre-nominating each sphere
 'Neath skies here thicklier lamped; with Egypt's priest
 By Nile celestial, hails, delighted, fields increased
 For astral parables, wherein sagest mind,
 Quick with mysterious truth, can loose the heavens, or bind;
 Can track the travelling pole-star, as it goes
 Through constellations all unfined, ere Nile-land rose;
 Or, allegorized the star-book's dazzling page,
 Trace, through all desert skies, soul's sacred pilgrimage.
 There, Archimedes finds the point he would
 Of leverage, to uplift all worlds, even this, towards good;
 Finds, in God's infinite will all souls to bless,
 The stand-point whence to start;—the goal, his righteousness.
 No more, here, Ptolemy courtly celebrates
 Feats fabulous of dim stars, but judges rational fates
 By virtuous influences of holier spheres,

Souled with the great and good of Heaven's all-hallowing years.
 There, many a special group of souls I viewed,
 In majesty of man and saintliest sisterhood,
 Whose least divine ambition was to expend
 Life in enlarging good, and blessing without end.
 "O ye benevolent spirits," I said, "on earth
 Who soothed with brotherly love and aidance, suffering worth ;
 Ye holy of all ages, of all creeds,
 Truth-taught, and prompters sage of kindest, justest deeds,
 Who fed the poor, the ignorant taught, the weak
 Strengthened to do their best ; truth gain, and gained, to speak ;
 Your prisoning frames exchanged for the opening sky,
 Continuing still to bless, seek self in Deity ;
 One thing I would entreat of ye, impelled
 By anxious thoughts oft risen from scenes mine eye beheld ;
 O seek, O guard the death-born soul, when first
 Naked, sin-stained it stands 'fore God, and fears the worst ;
 And the clear spirit, O calm ! that eased from breath
 With just one pitying smile salutes and passes death.
 Such generous cares God will repay." Replied
 One spirit I knew on earth and revered, to my side
 Approached ; " This needs not. Who on earth the state
 Of heaven's lost heir have toiled to amend, to show how great
 The space just right like his aspires to span ;
 More venerable to prove the mind and soul of man ;
 Make worthier of his end ; to achieve the sum
 Of social right ; found faith's pure simple creed to come ;—
 For in all worlds the growth of general mind
 Like treatment needs, that law by free rights stand defined ;
 Rights, asking not as earth's the patriot's blood
 Ever, yet everywhere that ill succumb to good ;—
 All who have laboured upwards toward the light,
 Intelligible, divine, since man in lowliest plight,
 Of glacial age or stone, first crouched the knee
 To some lone crag, his rock of help, his deity,
 Till now, when soul, of all idolatry shriven,
 Thine infinite unity, Lord ! sees symbolled best by heaven ;
 Have earned unconscious, God's approving glance,
 And now within the map of his broad countenance
 Exceed in joy unutterable, and trace
 Their destiny in the calm most-high of his embrace ;
 Where worshipper with worshipped, once made one,
 Live perfect, live divine in heavenliest union."
 " Live ye e'er thus," said Luniel ; " and because
 Ye have sought not to divide his own from Nature's laws ;
 But striven to spread his realm, the heaven within
 Man's mind ; loved good, and done ; shunned ill ; detested sin ;
 Because not alone ye have loved, but still the aims
 Dear to all heavenlies helped ; still toiled, may be, like names,
 To earn, though humbler, blessed the more, their weal
 Considering who themselves, the excellences they feel
 Lacking, or to theirs strange, most wanting, each

Favouring the other's need, to learn this, that to teach;
 Meet now for final union with the soul
 Felicitative of life, that sums and saints the whole;
 God, to his snowiest heights of spiritual rest,
 Translates ye, heavening all in his soul-hallowing breast."
 Swifter than sun-ray when from star to star,
 World wakening, space it leaps, thought scarce can feign how far
 Quicklier than pulsings of Heaven's firest light,
 Each wave of Luniel's wing new systems brought in sight.
 Discoverers, here, of all earth's liberal arts,
 Reign midst their several crafts; skill each to each imparts
 Soul-generous. There, explorers search fresh fields,
 Of thought, to invade new worlds; each hint sage legend yields
 Of holy commerce with more genial spheres,
 Richer perchance in grace, globe so to globe appears
 Near-eyed, and ignorant of the countless plans
 God hath to increase the bliss of worlds; the angel man's
 Powers to communicate, haste such means to use
 As dropped on distant orbs may boundless good diffuse.
 Here, Colon wings his thoughts to far-off spheres,
 Hid in the viewless deeps of nature's earliest years;
 And musing on such hints as tragic sage
 Of Cordova let fall to his beliefless age,
 His soul, here, feeds on sparse prophetic strains,
 Collate of sundry suns; oft eloquently sustains
 His justly-reasoned hope, that, there, 'mid space,
 One ultimate earth must be, soul's happier dwelling place;
 In virtues, blessings rich; in gold and gems
 Intelligible, that deck angelic diadems.
 There, too, his hero followers, pleased, equip
 'Neath their high ensigned dove, the spirit's celestial ship,
 Manned by their holy and apostolic crew,
 Peace-minded, who with love all worlds, all souls subdue.
 Here, in his Argosy embarked, we steer,
 Bright Luniel's hand on the helm which lights the hemisphere,
 Till, duly sailed, an outpost orb of space
 We near; and landing, view invention's trysting place.
 Here, daughter of necessity! abide
 Thy patient sons, till by success indemnified
 For all their toil; and hallowing every aim
 To God's great ends, they graff on his, the creature's claim
 Ingenuous, to go forth to happier stars,
 Where time all-just intents matures, ill's only mars;
 Gives to oblivion folly, and records
 Imperishably all deeds of good; all wisdom's words;
 All truth's bright thoughts; that inlight to us given,
 When God first breathed in man the luminous breath of Heaven;
 And so endowed with reason's testful ray,
 As makes, self-cloaked, sin's night; self-oped, man's moral day.
 "Though various here," I said, "these spheres of mind,
 Nor soul to each inapt, well pleased its like to find;
 Yet, through the ripening ages, as time runs,

Some differences will rise to rend the soundest suns."
 "Each soul," said Luniel, "every other group
 Of stars, than that its wont, is free to ; nor need coop
 In its own cares its energies, unconfined
 Of dominant kindred ; all immixed of divers kind,
 Kind Heaven secures ; but lest even one just end
 The soul allure past bounds pure equity may intend
 Like worthy dues to guard, in every sphere,
 Spirits of variant aims, but all like just, appear.
 Here, all-where, too, meet spirits of diverse strain,
 Searchful of others' fates, good bent to impart or gain ;
 Renew, enhance, their love of those on earth
 Held admirable or dear for truth's sake, or just worth.
 Here, patriot monarchs hating tyrant's throne,
 Deem despotry pertains not to born kings alone ;
 Despots confess of all ranks worst of things,
 Save sovereign mobs ; for crowds may sin not less than kings ;
 States 'gainst one soul sin even as one 'gainst all ;
 To each now Godward turned, earth's crowns how dim, how small !
 Here, Phocion, Regulus, where'er is heard
 One rational voice, set up and magnify man's word ;
 Word, worthy in all worlds of truest fame.
 Self love, nor popular wrong, nor dread of death can shame ;
 Well knowing, Death nor Hades e'er can be
 Rival or foe to truth and manly integrity.
 There, Aristides, Cato, Howard, bless
 Worlds with one stringent law tempered by tenderness ;
 Law, which to break in thought, is sin ; in act,
 Death ; and salvation sole to ensue and keep intact ;
 The law divine of being and doing good,
 Wherein we are one with God ; the act He wills, we would.
 Here, too, sit they who kings and peoples both
 Rate equitably ; and keep to God and man their troth.
 Here, Tacitus, sage of incorruptible pen,
 Worthiest Heaven's deeds divine, of all the sons of men,
 To enregister ; with stern but equalled stress
 Of judgment, judges kings, eternal righteousness
 As 'tis in heaven, his breast-law ; here, ordains
 States their amercement vast of pride-subjecting pains ;
 Due penitence for war's brutal gust ; Rome's first
 Of glories once ; now felt with shame and misery cursed ;
 Of luxury each convicts, and wanton wrong ;
 Fore all, the exemplar sets of virtue's children ; strong
 In justice, purity, pious innocence
 Unbarterable, and sweet soul-ignorance of offence."
 Fleetlier than those incessant beams which dart
 To circumscriptive skies from Nature's central heart,
 Mine angel guide and I. our wingèd way
 Renewed, intent to pierce in peace heaven's bright array,
 Shoot, both in mortal's and immortal's view,
 Like silvery flames serene, through Night's aerial blue,
 To worlds where spirits unrestful, soon or late,

Meet from all bounds of space ; and, friendly congregate,
 Are by intuitive caution led to choose
 Travel in orbs remote where they may most diffuse
 Of good, joy, wisdom, to less favoured spheres,
 Of undeveloped light, prerogative of years.
 Here, missionaries such of truth their stores congest,
 Accumulative of powers to aid their holy quest ;
 That, winged with light, they may the grace impart
 Of that impartial love which wins creation's heart ;
 There, souls of broadest thought, intent humane,
 Self dedicate to the toil sublime for others' gain,
 Plan their bright way from sphere to sphere, of soul
 Convertive, till to good, returns the unbounded whole.
 " With these, if any," Luniel said, " to cast
 Mine ultimate lot would I, with rapture join at last."
 For she foreknew, not stamped in seals of clay,
 But in the indelible passed, her orb should pass away.
 " True through all life, thy Maker so conceived."
 Said I, " thy lot, by change thou now wouldst sore be grieved,
 Whose changes show but seeming ; in thine own
 Essential, thou in heaven unchangeable wouldst be known."
 " So was it," Luniel answered, " so shall he,
 Unalterable, O God ! thy law of destiny ;
 Who all worlds rulest to that righteous end,
 Their good and thine own joy, thou didst from first perpend.
 Here, marked I many a spirit who made all thought
 Subordonnant to the intent humane for which he wrought.
 The Coën sage, here, head of that high clan,
 On earth devote to learn the bodily frame of man ;
 To heal, support, restore ; to lighten pain ;
 Now seeks how most to teach the immortal how to gain
 Knowledge of man as spirit, elect to live
 Invulnerable of years, of strength self generative ;
 Whom nor decay can dull, nor feebling age
 Disable, or check i' th' midst his skiey pilgrimage ;
 Set towards that boundless goal, that spiritual fine
 Infinite, who best knows, death fleshly, life divine.
 There, Galen's soul devout, life's mysteries
 Mid spherul forms more fair than human, loves to seize ;
 Life's motives analyse, life's ends detect,
 All harmonized in design, in reason and in effect.
 Harvey, Buffon, there, Cuvier, all renew,
 Self vowed to God, their worship of the all-good and true ;
 Still study as once on earth life's laws ; still prove
 With how methodic grace God regulates his love
 Toward creatures of all grades ; still strive to show
 How, circling through all worlds, one vital truth doth flow ;
 One quickening, soul sustaining, governing force,
 Which animating all form, derives from God its source ;
 To this gives reason, rule ; foreknowledge gives
 O'er the to-come ; to this, instinct whereby it lives.
 Here, by mean thoughts, transmute through virtuous mould,

(Wise adept's thirst for truth converts to moral gold,
 Soul-richening verities, of a rational creed
 Heaven asks of earth, and earth fails never yet to need,)
 And natural alchemy of generous mind,
 We saw pour forth at will its treasures unconfined,
 Unperishing, which, evoked by art sublime,
 Shall unlike gild the tomb of predeceaseful time.
 Lavoisier, there, the elements of all things
 Solves, and at will compacts, and their constituent springs
 From form crystalline and unmattered force,
 With delicacy divine tracks to its parent source.
 Linné, here, proven in vegetive life, still sees
 Mind ; and in moss minute ; even as in mightiest trees,
 Whose growth is as an empire's ; marks one soul
 Of ever-developing perfection guide the whole.
 Lieuwenhoeck, here, in life invisible learns
 The infinite hidden, and still that God revealed, discerns
 Who covenants but with life create by laws
 Inviolable, himself their substance, sum, end, cause.

Swift as the mindful glance, night come, each star
 Sends to his brother spheres, familiar, though afar ;
 Measure to us, how from its centering place
 To orbit scarce seen light can, leaping, conquer space,
 The angelic wing unwearied rapt our flight
 Through rings of dazzling air, walled by untempered night,
 To spheres where those of soil once, now of soul
 Culturers, where'er new starfields stretch, or streamlets roll
 Of orbs, like those which, from diluvian urn,
 Pour down the skiey steep, plains spiritual now learn
 With vital virtues sown to reap ; the increase
 Of that rich glebe whose roots are joy, whose fruits are peace
 " Here realised," the angel said, " time's dreams behold,
 And that celestial life these happier worlds unfold.
 The denizens of these orbs Being's proper ends
 As pure intelligences seek, God's and Nature's friends ;
 Prompt here, now there, in shrewd and resolute band,
 The whole, depth, height, to explore the all parent love hath planned,
 And so in spheres diverse his tracks pursue,
 Old as prenatal Night, as day's spring ever new.
 Ofttimes, the humble seer, who nature's laws
 Loves and reveres, and aims to ally with goodness' cause,
 Shows natural rights in virtues all converge
 Conservant of true force, and so in Deity merge
 Whence first they rayed ; oft, hopeful, here contrives
 Subsidiary designs, whence nature, pleased, derives
 New modes of self enchantment ; oft combines
 With God's great plans, all good faith ancillary divines ;
 Thence issuant glories in truth's flight sublime
 And modes exhaustless joys to avail of hallowing time ;
 The involvement watching of each special race
 Exaggerative of good. The inferior to displace
 By better, nature progressive, fails not ;

But with the coming kind casts e'er her fateful lot ;
Secreting instinct first as base of mind,
Affection, passion, next, as wheels in motion wind ;
Till, with demonstrant reason summed, the soul,
Fit to conceive God's being, symmetric stands, and whole."
"Woe's me," I said, "for souls that when they die
Have failed the exacting tests of God to satisfy."
"Not aught create, nor all, nor lapse of time
Immeasurable, with God can palliate one crime ;
But mercifulness toward soul of limited force
In virtue and foresight both, hath like and equal course ;"
Adds Luniel ; "Who in life's allotted tests
Fail, and by penitent griefs have soothed the righteous breasts
Of those they have wronged on earth ; who self convict
Of sin, abjured and mourned through law divinely strict,
Mount to this upper life, these holier skies,
Of purity progressive, till power be theirs to rise,
Through virtuous means, the inspiring hope, to employ
Their faculties to the ends that yield their Maker joy ;
Who all the heights and depths of soul commands,
And weighs men's motived lives in the hollow of his hands ;
Whose spirit, incarnate alway in man's race,
Angel and mortal both doth in one zone embrace.
Behold, my guide said, "here, where now we stand,
This roseate shadowed sphere where spirits of grace, once banned
Basely, by man's spite, dwell ; that to this shore
Of bliss, have passed through straits of rolling flame and gore ;
Souls, loved by God and men ; and some not less
By immolant zealots, now, heart-changed, by conscience' stress ;
For not alone are wrongs corrected, here ;
But hate, pride, envy changed to feelings pure, and clear
From every taint of self that might have bred
In friendship, rivallous thought ; thought, now which leads instead,
Envy to emulation ; hate, to love
Of good ; and pride, to pride that souls in God which move
And live, and have their essence, to forgive,
Know better than huge lengths of vengeful days to live.
Here, those who once, from purpose misconceived,
Tracked to their death some foe, or friend, who yet believed
Haply, one ampler tenet than their own
Curt creed contained, now gladden in spirit to make known
Their sympathies with all who hold the true,
Here opening on their minds, the infinite good which view.
There, saints and martyrs all their memory lose
Of wrongs and deaths ; each prompt ripe blessings to diffuse
Full-handed, on faith's friends wherever tried ;
And with their bright examples adorn religion's side.
For means of well-doing lost, for sad neglect
Of blessings, erring souls had lost all right to expect,
These waste no time, I saw, in vain lament ;
But henceforth haste to achieve alway God's wise intent ;
Each acting as with Deity inspired,

And conscious of the end by wariest love desired.
 There, he of Tarsus, 'mong apostles least,
 Self noted, but by men, Christ's best and noblest priest,
 Holds it not impious now that man should learn
 Evil to know from good ; good, godlike and eterne ;
 All evil perishable ; but vaunts his own
 Life ta'en at last by taste of tools to him well known ;
 And, all existence ranged in one supreme
 Trine ; and so summed, views God, man, nature, as they seem
 To mind imperfect, but expanding ever,
 In moral might and worth, by pure and high endeavour.
 Savonarola, Huss, Joan, Jerome, here,
 For human ignorance shed the condonative tear ;
 O'er man's malignance mourn ; not long ! with joy,
 Teresa, Gersen, teach how spirits most rapt, employ,
 In wholesome change, renewed life's total round ;
 And with high ecstasy blend experience like profound."
 "To souls," I said, "of such transcendent strain,
 Heaven seems an easy prize to win, and won, retain ;
 'Tis but to live as ye were wont below,
 Add but reward to worth ; say for 'I trust,' 'I know.'"
 Guyon there, here, Hypatia, Bourignon,
 High confidences exchange, each vowed to God alone ;
 Here, Calvin, there, Servetus, side by side
 God one the same confess ; and, in spirit clarified,
 This, by repentance fires, and that, by grace
 Exalted to forgive, in mutual love embrace ;
 The unity, that, of Godhood hailing, now ;
 And this the elect one's bliss, Heaven's first end, fain to avow
 Here, Crysostom and Luther find new fields
 To expatiate in, of truth ; of all that freedom yields
 For spirit to glory humbly in ; of care
 The chastened soul now gives to truths essential. Prayer
 Voiceless, Roëhm's and Helmont's shades, combined,
 For soul illumining gifts, breathe to their Lord all-kind,
 That lead to primal light, the plenar sense
 Of life supreme, and love of Deity more intense.

Swift faring as an eye-blink of the sun,
 Which, when some envious cloud, its course abortive run,
 Heat-molten, evanisheth ; shows to wakeful eye,
 Star-studying, isle or hill snowswathed, 'neath Martian sky ;
 In just such time as thought's from thought discerned,
 We arrived, where but to attain, my mind once strongliest yearned ;
 Where nature's realms with spirits sublimest teemed,
 Elysian realms, most meet for shadowy gods, meseemed.
 There, many a bard and prophet prone to stray
 Mid stars, rejoice to enjoy perfection's widening way ;
 The liberties extreme, God e'er appends
 To rational souls, self-vowed to high and virtuous ends.
 Here, Israel's seer, Nile cradled, he, who led
 God's chosen through the sea, and in all people's stead,
 The graven stones of Law received, and took

On man's behalf the oath to obey the eternal book ;
 Daoud, here, and Ayub blend songs ; while round
 Concordant, angel strings, as mountains light, the sound,
 Snatch ; and with choicer art, zeal more ablaze,
 World broad benevolence blend with those thrice blessed lays.
 They in all lands, all worlds, are Heaven's elect
 Who him best honouring, strive most good for man to effect.
 The prophet choir, and he who heads their van
 Pre-ominous of the fate, how blessed ! of future man,
 On scrolls abestine scored with fiery pens
 Soothly forebodes all worlds, as once this world of men's,
 Of divinized humanity, the state
 E'en lowliest, that o'er death shall yet predominate ;
 Of nature heavenly bride and mother—may,
 By holiest spirit impregn'd, pure e'er as dawning day,
 Man's universal sonship breathing through
 The spell predictive, once incredible, now known true.
 Valmiki, here, to crowds, with curious awe
 Astound, delights to show how fancy, skilled to draw
 Her visions once upon the illumined page,
 Limns fables now on the air, for audiences more sage ;
 Shows, whilst with billowy grandeur sweeps along
 In strains of tidal strength his stream of patriot song
 Fore orbs, how he his hero-godlings leads
 Through huge emprises ; chaunts their world enlightening deeds ;
 How mythic Rama his generous battle forms ;
 Routs every demon foe, wrong's every fastness storms,
 That might sin's purpose serve, or to constrain
 The innocent 'gainst their will ; to ratify the reign
 Of evil, Heaven's rebel, or help defile
 The soul serenely chaste which lives but for his smile,
 Her husband's, lover's, lord's, and grown more pure
 Through suffering and suspense, love's union makes more sure.
 Vyasa, here, no more the peril sings
 Of crownlets lost by cruel jest of kindred kings,
 Lunar and solar, demon-driven to wage
 War, who to wile truced time in forced companionship
 This, realm by realm his empire diced away,
 And the world's sceptre that, impledged in paltry play ;
 But rating regal power in sacred awe
 Hails sovereign sway as aid to Heaven's divinest law.
 Never again those bards the authentic force
 Of elements hail but hymn their sole creative source ;
 All nature still participant shown with man,
 And animal life revered, completes heaven's kindest plan.
 Orpheus anew there, harps the adventurous strain
 And starry voyage of soul athwart the ærial main ;
 Founds later rites ; and to perfection brings
 The spirit self-chastened, trained to gaze but heavenly things ;
 Nor, in pursuit of soul's salvation brook
 One moment's backward glance, though life were in the look,
 Here Olen, Linus there, the omnipotent ease
 Sings of creative power and justice' stern decrees,

There, haply Homer's awful shade amends
 His lay, and powers divine and human sings as friends.
 Pure and impartial ; not contestful ; urged
 By fate to fraud, or strife, prayer-bribed these, those sin-scourged.
 Seeks Hesiod there in heaven's exterior stars
 Virtue's abode ; views pleased, all time's Titanic wars
 Of good 'gainst evil, vile Typhonian power
 Not unfordoomed, nor yet slain in its culminant hour ;
 Renewed to happier issue. Æschylus, here
 Still thunders in his clouds, the same oracular seer
 As erst in Greece, his parables of man,
 Sin-shackled, God-loosed ; throned ; Heaven's vast triadic plan,
 For teachable soul ; the secret now dares tell
 How every untrue god should learn before he fell
 To Hadeän pains, remorseful there to lie,
 The one sole name in heaven they all should deify,
 And should all theirs displace. There, Sophocles,
 Heart-racked no more by sense of man's mean destinies,
 (Sorrow for even involuntary sin
 No need for hallowing there, no risk of perishing in)
 His lyre with joy-wreaths crowns, to extol the worth
 Of immortality's new career, the spirit's rebirth ;
 Euripides, there, greets from earth's orbèd tomb
 Redeemed man's faithful soul, greets, and now knows by whom.
 In raptured views, here, Pindar knows his isles
 Elysian, of the blessed, which sin nor death defiles,
 To spheres of light expanded, where the soul
 Responsible, age by age tried, as time's cycles roll,
 All stain lost, quits all faults, and virtue-crowned
 Those spiritual gold-flowers culls, which strew that starry ground.
 Alcæus, Sappho, here, their vows renew
 By each other sworn, those twain, towards love divine and true,
 Kleantes and the Pleiad bardlets, now,
 Their mutual love, and ends self-less, heart-oned, avow ;
 In God's perpetual lauds, in justice praise,
 Conspire they, both to show and walk in virtue's ways.
 The star they serve, is that majestic lyre,
 Type of each grateful soul that hymns his heavenly sire,
 Eternal, infinite, without all change,
 In essence, passed all thought of bounded Being's range.
 Korinna, here, the prize of that pure strife
 'Gainst sin, Olympian souls are crowned with, heavenly life,
 Wins, strives for. Bion, Moschus, there, sustain
 With hymnists of all time a loftier, holier, strain ;
 Soul's death, by the Eternal Love deplored,
 These sing, and those, Heaven's joy on godlike life restored.
 Here, learns Lucretius' master mind to see
 Amidst Heaven's seminal orbs the indwelling Deity ;
 Not beauty sole ; not crowds of gods ; but one
 Equal and apt to all the world-machine needs done ;
 And Tartarus' pains remedial proved, direct
 To righteousness and joy, joys in the glad prospect.

Joy, Maro's heart, there, rays forth, as he sees
 The blessed results of soul's abstergent penalties,
 And righteous meeds of justice, most divine
 When moderateest, her beam, towards mercy shows incline.
 To worlds, here, Ovid still their birth chants ; strives
 Their tribes to instruct with truth ; the purity of their lives
 Counts man's best faith ; best worship, this, to instill
 In all souls love of good, souls self transformed from ill.
 There, Lucan views with philosophic soul,
 One Deity who creates, contains, rules, loves the whole ;
 Here, Terence, proud of fellowship intense
 With man's vicarious power, which sways, 'neath Providence,
 Each sphere, and suffers through its regal will,
 And mortal pains, the dues its fate is to fulfill,
 Joys all-where that to all create, may be
 Soul freedom, and His love, who made man's spirit free,
 Manilius, there, who, scrupulous from afar,
 Would moralize once the aspects of moon or planet ; star
 Or group of stars constellate, "such as these"
 Said Luniel, "here, to expound man's mortal destinies ;
 His thought, space scanning, rather bends to assign
 To reason's ultimate spheres, (that universe of divine
 Perfections, which, as virtue, power, and love,
 Star Heavens interior skies, all skies, all orbs, above,)
 Those fateful influences o'er soul which stand
 High'st ; and show, God to obey, the world is to command.
 Boëthius, here, Synesius, sing and teach,
 Altern, in heartiest hymns, the God all natures preach ;
 The simple, infinite, Deity ; world-adored,
 By man, by angel ; man's, creation's, heavenly Lord ;
 With force resistless, science summed, both prove
 How boundless reason rules the world, and rules through love.
 Fardusi, there, of angel spirit foresent
 By God, 'gainst evil sworn to wreck the firmament,
 Vaunts gloriously the triumph ; and of good
 O'er sin the enchantress vile, and all her hellish brood,
 Here, Zardusht, owns his error ; and conceives
 How evil annulled, perforce, God good sole conqueror leaves.
 There, Saadi, Djami here, God's mystic love
 Whisper to skiey saints, their secret lore to prove,
 Sign oral of the Ineffable ; or show
 'Neath word-veils truths half-hid, souls dread yet seek to know.
 Meet Æsop, Bidpai, Phædrus ; one main tongue
 Like construable, man's tribes and lowlier lives among,
 Nature's, they interpret to the sweet surprise
 Of angel-souls ; tongue rife with rational thought and wise.
 Join Babrius, Lokman ; teach all in one school
 How kings may best serve men ; and sages learn to rule
 He here the Eddaic lay who grimly penned,
 Graved in dark lurid runes creation's awful end ;
 Prophetic ; and from Hades called the ghost
 Of buried god ; learns how, of all things, Deity most,

Hath calm, hath peace ; foreboding all intent,
 No dissidence in decrees, no surprise at event ;
 Dubiety nor debate, can ever be ;
 Nor divine subterfuge, the all fatherly equity
 Sate ; shows how not in twilight strife Heaven's powers
 'Mid themselves war, as men, blind, on this earth of ours,
 But 'gainst unholy acts and wicked will
 Battling, contrive at last good's triumph o'er all ill.
 Ossian, there, hails the Eternal spirit sun,
 The Deity who to all gives life-light, takes of none.
 Here, Kaedmon hymns, to listening orbs, the mind
 All formative, infinite, yet, which, finite form defined
 In nature, in the soul, in sacred life,
 Fills, and each force sustains wherewith the whole is rife.
 Du Bartas, there, here, Groot, no more, the fall
 Of man and nature sing ; but this, the rebirth of all
 And self recovery, with divine consent,
 Of soul, create to obey, and love, the Omnipotent ;
 That, the benignant advent of each star
 New birthed which draws his eye, light sensitive, from afar
 Its elements recounts, to souls select,
 Its character, its course, its destiny, and aspect,
 Here, Milton soars and sings ; there, Dante steers
 His spectral barque, night-sailed, o'er time's unfathomed years
 Though neither happily finds, by God's good will,
 Room in his boundless world for endless woe, nor ill ;
 While both with penitent majesty confess
 God everywhere ; and where He lives, He lives to bless.
 Here, Shakespeare's spirit, conceptual of the passed,
 Sweeps space, a giant ghost ; and leaning upon the blast,
 Rounds many a sphere ; notes all things, and surveys
 Sad, penetrative, benign, life's least and largest ways ;
 And more of things to come contemplant, now,
 Life's intricate ends toward good all tending, seeks to avow.
 Boiardo, Geoffrey, and, of many a lay
 The weird inventors, there, all nature's hidden array
 Of magical miracles revel in, nor find
 Proof but of generous power, where'er creative, kind.
 Here, Spenser's spirit directs, nor bids one rest,
 All virtues, sunbright band, howbeit on several quest,
 With steadfast will, each, active, haste to prove
 Its title to enjoy that meed Celestial love
 Immutable, shall yield to souls who have striven,
 And, through the unlooked for test, the approval won, of Heaven.
 Here, Camoëns and Ereïlla, warlike strains
 Alternating with high deeds of courage, which disdains
 To compass less than conquest of a state ;
 Some world-realm thrall'd of sin, truth would emancipate,
 Him join, who Salem Liberate sang ; and now
 The blessed assault repeats, and leads, 'neath saintly vow
 Of hosts who time's long battailous path have trod,
 To win as victors, heaven perforce, the peace of God.

There, Pope's, Young's, Thomson's shades, devout, sublime,
 Good in all nature trace, trace in the Eternal, time,
 Here, Blackmore's rational soul, from every sphere
 Fresh proofs draws of God's love and equity, and as here,
 Inconfutable in song, the applause secures
 Of each majestic judge whose favour fame ensures.
 Here, Rowley's spirit superb, self-humbled, seeks
 Sin's forged delights to expose ; here, virtue's champion, speaks
 'Mid young enthusiasts for the all true and pure ;
 His love, and shows how faith most tried, is brave to endure,
 There, Maddalo's sensitive soul, of stainless birth,
 Springs to embrace in Heaven, the God he missed on earth ;
 There, Julian's, with his friend's (from thoughts how vain,
 How reasonless, of chance, world-gendering of the inane,
 Cleared, or of paired Creators, foes in will,
 This, lord of good and light, that, lord of dark and ill),
 Twin spirits whose brilliant bale, like stars malign
 In the void ascendant, long drew tears from Mercy's eyne ;
 Now, both rejoicing in redemptive light
 Of reason, adore and prove one sole good infinite.
 Here, Adonäis, blessed by all above,
 The Soul Eternal hymns, God, Lord of light and love ;
 The universal Deity, in all spheres
 Worshipped, and in all souls, like countless as His years."

As when in line exorbitant has been cast
 Around two focal lights an ellipse just and vast,
 Surrounded by a fair and stately throng,
 Whose rapt acclaim revived tones of pre-earthly song,
 Each, 'mid a satellite ring which round them paced,
 A pair I knew, I marked, and to accost them haste,
 Each separate light, of like, and liberal, flame ;
 Me they at once salute, and welcome by my name ;
 As when with binary movement far in space
 Twin stars each other round, and both, alternant, face ;
 Advance, salute, withdraw, and restant, gaze
 Voiceless on their beloved, the lode-star of their days,
 So these conceptive each of other's views,
 Communicative of truth, seek truth but to diffuse ;
 And I, who hailed at sight, right many a pair
 Angelic while on earth joined them, benefic, there.
 Here, reunite, all gladden ; and all dilate
 On the blessed theme, to all true spirit and elevate,
 Common and dear ; soul's progress through the passed,
 The future's heavenly gates, and faith's reward, at last.
 Here, or in kindred clustering starlets dwell
 Who best have fret the lute, or tuned the sounding shell.
 Arion, there, Jubal, Terpander, lead
 Some vestal orb to obey the air their lyre or reed
 Charms worlds with ; here, Amphion (prompt to raise,
 On spiritual harmonies, cities whose walls are praise ;
 Whose streets are thanksgiving ; whose gates are prayer ;
 Whose denizen souls at one with Heaven's intents), bids share

Their kindest homes with those whose sentient breath,
Breathed even through brazen tubes, things dead redeems from death,
Earth's mightier melodists, all in one sweet strain,
That peace to express man's soul is maddening yet to attain,
Joined ; nor shall such for e'er be foiled, who wait
His all-sway, which at last true world-peace shall instate.

Quick as the scintillant shafts which towering rise
Up from the sun's broad orb to pierce the enringing skies,
Pass we to stars, where arts of old that graced
Earthlife, or dignified by memory now replaced,
Still honoured, flourish ; doubtless, of the twain
Best pleased I, who of art knew most the stem and strain,
To Pheidias, here, no more the form divine
Of Deity seems to man permissible to design ;
Sufficient be it his essence to conceive
Unimageable, whose life it is soul-life to believe.
To Zeuxis, there, Parrhasius, here, is given
New skill to grace all truth with use sanctioned of heaven,
The soul's most sacred dreams to actualize,
In every shape and sense joy blameless can devise.
Here, Angelo's great spirit, on vastier bounds
Than Sistine shrine presents, his potent thought expounds
With sceptral pencil, on the ærial domes
High soaring into space which stud those starry homes.
And if earth's rise pourtraying, and the doom
Which recusant soul awaits in worldstates yet to come ;
Not now, in fulminant wrath makes God remove
His creatures from his sight ; but judging all in love,
Exults in legislative calm, in peace,
All conquering, and the reign of justice ne'er to cease ;
So here, who the awe-inspiring scene first drew
Of God's last judgment, now with false contrasts the true ;
Deems fallible fancy's fault too harsh ; nor feigns
Joy felt, to meet one skilled to sketch the Edenic plains,
Fair match for sterner scheme ; and so diffuse
O'er time's remembered scenes heaven's own more glorious hues ;
Earth-scopes at will recalled ; and studies made
To illustrate saintliest life. Beato's, Raphael's aid
Guido, Murillo, Blake, invoke ; their powers
Used to adorn such lays as charm the immortal's hours,
And happily leisured gods, who press to hear
Prophet or bard his song recite ; or, tome of seer
Turn, marvelling, leaf by leaf, with love imbued
Of mind's miraculous gifts, in solemn solitude.
Here, founders of all crafts, all science, meet
Their perfectors ; and both their marvellous ends complete.
This one, with fanes of every form, to show
One spirit alone divine as God's, made mind could know ;
That every plan of sacred cast, ornate
Or simple, or vast or small, true faith shall consecrate ;
These, Him would honour sole in unity ; these,
In countless forms of life, and all life's energica.

Here, they who temples built by Nile, or pitched
 'Mid desert sands, grey booths, by badger's hides enriched ;
 They who together Ornan's threshing floor
 Hallowed, and all to God who built, or rich or poor ;
 Hophra, Bezaleel, Hiram ; who, where smiles
 Ocean on Attic shores, Rhodian or Delian isles,
 Their snow white shrines and fluted shafts combined,
 As purity's sign, the soul to raise, and charm the mind ;
 Hold now, all worlds as temples ; every soul
 A festive fane to Him devote, who framed the whole.
 Cadmus here, Faustus there, new modes devise
 Of symboling thought unfixed ; scheme how, to distant skies
 To impart intelligence ; while Franklin binds
 With tameable lightnings spheres, as serpent charmer winds
 Worms wise but fangless round his breast, and plans
 With Watts, new forms of force, for mightier worlds than man's.
 Here, souls with gifts engrafted that 'neath the chill
 Pressure of want, drear lack of culture, or sage will,
 Bloomed not on earth, in this expand ; their prime
 Of nature but deferred to heaven's more genial clime.
 There, innocent souls, foes but to wrong, hate, strife,
 Speak with God's special voice, sparing all breathful life.
 The patriarchs of all arts, all sacred, there,
 Aim steeper, more sublime discoveries make and share,
 As worlds and elements, there, more grand than ours,
 Fields vaster, more diverse, yield, claim, superior powers.
 New solar laws, here, Kepler, and the Pole,
 Wisest of all who watched the worlds round night that roll,
 Interpret spiritually ; with finest skill
 Showing how all results must gravitate towards God's will ;
 How his attractive love unites and binds
 Godwards, time's general soul, earth's individual minds ;
 And how all heavenly systems men devise,
 Hath each true archetype in God's eternal skies.
 Pride of his age, his orb, Kopernik, here,
 Motives of moral act, not in man's vital sphere,
 Selfish, necessitate, shrinks not now to show
 How, from one central truth, for truth is God, there flow
 Essential verities, through all worlds, that fill
 All time, attracting good, repulsive of all ill.
 And for that God is truth, lo ! Kepler, here
 Unveiling heaven-wide laws, proves, yet, with holy fear,
 How mazy schemes, of credence intricate,
 Fail 'fore that faith in God which nerves soul as with fate
 All conquering, to avow the immutable one,
 And indivisible, God, all wise, all-good ; who none
 Equal, or like, or second e'er hath known ;
 The holy spirit, all-sire, all present, all in one :
 Proves, how from out one central force emanates
 The life which makes alive all souls, and all sustains ;
 The unsleepful Judge who wields the whole at will,
 The establisher of right, the exterminator of ill.

There, Galilei shows how truest creeds
 Truth warmliest welcome, such so proved by kindest deeds.
 His soul no more by dubious friends perplexed,
 Nor treacherous priests ; no more with persecutions vexed,
 Shows to admiring orbs with joy elate,
 The sky-scheme, and how simple its unexceptive state,
 That every sphere, so willed the intelligent cause,
 Round other, or itself, revolve by fated laws ;
 Each orbital movement of Heaven's world-thronged whole
 One incollisive plan speaking, one master soul.
 Learns Newton here new laws orbicular ; bides
 The age long lapse of years eternity divides
 With time in conning new organic frames
 Of mundane being ; life, here, from ignorance reclaims
 Heavenwards ; and loyal to His gracious force
 Who to all things prescribes their interactive course,
 Now, this world shows how truth with science sides ;
 Now, that ; and like a god, in passing, times their tides.
 There, Flamsteed, and Laplace, through fineless space,
 Detect in mightiest ease the sunstar's nebulous race,
 Through all its varied vastness, and combine
 More marvellous proofs to adduce of mechanism divine ;
 Proofs, too, of how from one chief truth made known,
 Light-wise, all worship spreads concentric round God's throne.
 And how all natural systems reason views
 Based on one variant plan, congruous, one end pursues.
 Here, Dalton, pious, venerable, contrasts
 As framed by God's good will which all precedes, outlasts,
 The primary motes of spheres ; nor e'er to chance
 Compellant, prone to ascribe their world genetic dance
 Twin atomies meets with anywhere ; but finds
 In God's minutest acts studies for vastest minds.
 Swift as the impetuous messages of light
 Hurl'd from the sun's hot heart, which daze Heaven's spatial night ;
 Fleet as the healing angel's arrows fly,
 When he his golden quiver is emptying o'er the sky,
 Intent to slay some vast and viperous pest
 An ignorant city clasps, delirious to her breast ;
 The Leonine sign we reach, where, poised in space,
 In kinglihood of light, one star holds sovran place.
 " Mark thou these generous souls," said Luniel, " round
 Who all the more they give, in their own gifts abound ;
 Worlds gratefuller for good on them bestowed
 By lowliest spirits, who know the boon they bare a load,
 Howbeit by love imposed ; and humbly sought
 But to be loved by those whose every life they had bought
 At their own life's cost ; souls which perceive all time
 As men a passing storm in some precarious clime ;
 Or an impermanent star, which peers through space,
 And comes and goes, nor knows one fixed abiding place."
 From orblet on to orb, we winged. " Behold,"

Said I, "how warmer stars hope's livelier buds unfold."
Here, many a troop of joy-eyed souls, we viewed,
Glad to rejoin hope; those to glad the multitude,
Telling how they on earth, despairing, died;
And wakening here, hope, first of forms before them eyed.
Souls, innocent in God's eye of all offence,
If being born were none, nor dying in defence
Of virtue, piety, or their sacred breath
Who had given them to the light, and hallowed so their death;
Now, circling reverent round their guide, the more
Their trust, so much her power showed mightier than before.
"Souls these," said Luniel, "time's millennial course
Sixfold repeated, shows with ever greatening force,
Convictive, teaching virtue as the test
Of earthlife, temperance, truth, and Heaven's perfective rest;
For blameless spirits enough. Let sin sustain
Just discipline; and false gods disproved, of angel strain,
All error bounden at last to disappear
One holiest faith shall yet fill earth's e'er-bettering sphere;
Hosts spiritual of truth shall yet o'errun,
Unconquerable, the orb, from rise to set of sun.
Souls such as they are these, who from the first
Have combated that deceit which conscience, sin accursed,
Dreads of a vengeful Power whose posthumous wrath
Burns, passed the tomb, to bar soul from its upward path.
Through penitence, towards that peace which fills Heaven's sky,
The balmy air saints breathe of boundless charity;
The great return of spirit created, led
Star by star, life by life, back to all Being's head,
The vital fulness of divinity, there
Concentrate, to complete, and Heaven's perfection share.
Consummate spirits are these who time by time
Offer themselves to God, to work his will sublime;
On his fixed word, as on an altar, lay
The life He lent, to plead to soul-worlds, wiled astray,
The rectifying truth, regenerant, pure,
Remedial, which alone, through all the ages, sure,
And through all worlds sufficient, serves to save,
By brotherly help, the gift their provident Father gave;
And so conserve, to their enduring good,
Who else might alway err in trackless dubietude.
Souls such as these, the simple truth attest
Of Him the one, the sole, the mercifullest, the best,
Who feels, with all He hath made, their faults, their needs,
Their weaknesses, defects; and 'gainst imperfect deeds,
Or blameable acts, sets justice, less severe
Than infinite right might claim; for, finite, who could bear?
Here, noting, too, soul's fall perpetual, due
To faculties imperfect, incompetent to foreview
Act's sequence; yet, in man's elastic strain,
Rise, grand if gradual, hail, towards Heaven's perfective plane;

Embodying thus, its last and best event,
 The great Designer's vast and primariest intent.
 Here Vico, awed, learns how, in the Heavenly mind,
 Not only all advance of human soul designed,
 But all the orbs of universal space,
 In God's infinite plan have each progressive place.
 There, Campanella, soaring on the wings
 Of the world's giant soul, up to the source of things,
 Finds it the end ; and spirit's heavenly rest,
 Immortal and divine, in God's all-hallowing breast ;
 Knows essence and existence, in things made,
 Variant, and sole in God identic ; so displayed
 The world's base spiritual ; in meet degree
 All things as they respect the love of Deity,
 Within their natures shrined. Here, Cardan finds,
 Not proved by stars self-lit, but by truths only, minds
 Illumed in the Heaven God lights, life boons dispense
 Reflective of His power, His truth, His all-presence ;
 His, who endowed the moral world with one
 Chief gift of freest choice in Him, of union
 With good eternal, or of ill's forlorn
 Estate, foredoomed to cease, of imperfection borne.
 Agrippa, here, who to all occult lore
 Gave method, meaning, place in science, now, no more
 With vanity vexed, makes boast o' the shadowy show
 Of dread and secret craft ; nor longer longs to know
 The inmost spirits of all material things,
 Of elements and of stars, nor through enchanter's rings
 Raise ghosts, or fabulous demons ; but each thought
 Bends now to augment the sense of wonders truth hath wrought ;
 Nor so much what is penetrable, to soul
 Searchful of truth, as what's permissible to the whole.
 Here Lully, more successful than of old
 In one great art combines, resolves, and seeks to unfold,
 The mysteries of all science, so to bind
 In one regenerate shape all instruments of mind,
 Moral and rational, which to soul shall show
 True certitude in all things men think, wish, feel, or know.
 This, found in Deity only, which enfolds
 All perfect infinities, and deploys the truths it holds,
 To mind observant of God's works and ways,
 As, to some sun-seer, night unveils her starry maze ;
 Shows all laws, rays from His eternal sphere,
 And boundless, issuant ; loveful these, and those severe ;
 Unvarying all, controlling all events,
 All equal to the ends of infinite firmaments.
 And, if created mind, affecting what
 Passes comprise, part fail ; yet all inadequate not
 The infinite to appraise ; nor ours to clutch
 Space boundless, as a whole, yet of that whole how much
 Man's common reason grasps, as when one sees
 Space opening up to space its starry immensities ;

So, though in reason limited, in belief
 Illimitable, of God we hold and have in chief.
 Hutton, De Luc, there, Werner, many a globe
 Fire cored, rock-girdered, search ; bent reverently to probe,
 In emulous love of sacred knowledge, all
 The secrets God hath shrined in every heavenly ball ;
 And primary elements sought no more, all teach,
 God's plastic hand imparts virtue no natures reach.
 Here, Huyghens, oft, his preconceptive lines
 Of worlds and souls, compares : and vastening all, refines
 To more majestic purports, and to ends
 Nobler than charmed of old, on earth, his noblest friends.
 Swift as on time's first day, Heaven's thought-made light,
 With one meek glance, dispelled the inconspicuous night,
 Pretemporal, like extensive with all space ;
 And spheres surprised first eyed each other's stonied face ;
 Fleetlier through shining æther than the ray
 Darts forth of polar light ; we spirits, our spacious way
 Cleave, to seats loveliest, where the ripened fruits
 Of wise Humanity glow ; the errors faith transmutes
 To judgments generous, just ; the loves and hates,
 Like holy, righteous heaven adopts, reciprocates ;
 Farther than those bright sparklings of his crown
 Through space interminable, our sun sends ceaseless down,
 To the watchful world ; in an eye's glance, we passed,
 Commoved in spirit, and sad, and reached, descending, last,
 Those clear and fortunate stars, where many wise,
 Earnest in good ; for good, prompt all to sacrifice,
 Dwell ; and with sight far bent towards the end of things,
 Live righteously, and leave to Heaven all orderings ;
 Who all things view, with reverent trust, as weighed
 On God's determinant beam ; and Heaven's broad future laid
 On such foundations as love, joyed, may see ;
 And Justice, to all souls commend, as yet to be.
 Here, Henoch, joined with Atlas, walks the sky,
 Translated, one, to an ever-brightening destiny ;
 One, God to praise, for every new-born star
 Which decks heaven's coasts where His beloved Immortals are.
 There, too, the thronèd three, who, long through Heaven,
 Followed the star of God when Christ to earth was given,
 The Eternal Love pursue ; and through all skies
 Humanity sole proclaim the spirit God deifies.
 Here, many a soul all creatural virtues graced,
 Of all earth's faiths, I saw, high in God's favour placed ;
 Buddhist and Brahman, Mazdyan, Moslem, Jew,
 Shaman's, Sikh's, Christ's ; of all the world's beliefs no few,
 Gladdening ; yet grievous that so oft man's mind
 Will God's salvation deem to faith or form confined,
 Church, temple, ritual password, sect, or creed,
 While all God asks from men, is pure thought, righteous deed,
 And love of Him, sole : truth this, one and same,
 Common to earth and heaven, heaven's saints and earth's conclaim.

Here, Socrates, humane and humbly wise,
 Inspired, immortal, death, life's fugitive foe defies ;
 And knowing now man's thought the measuring rod
 Of all things, all things knows, and knows things all in God.
 There, Zeno learns how all-compelling fate
 Hangs on free choice ; free choice alone necessitate
 Of God, resolved that privileged rank to ensure
 And range, to soul, He had made immortal to endure ;
 Made, and foreseeing how men choose to live,
 Their right saved, and secured His own prerogative.
 Here, Epicurus, sanguine, now, no more
 Creation's seeds to assort, but greatlier far to adore
 The star-sower of all space, fails not to find
 Fit spheres to sway, wherein to mould the ductile mind
 Of fallible cast, to wisdom ; and incite
 Souls purified to aid the all-active Infinite ;
 Who, joy eternal not in stirless rest
 Seeks, but in soul redeemed, and worlds by kindness blessed.
 Stilpon the blessings shows of chastened mind,
 In harmony with the laws of Nature pure and kind ;
 No more, here, Pyrrho doubts ; but certified
 Of Deity, in his soul contemns all thought beside ;
 There, D'Hobach, Volney, Hume, while scanning spheres,
 And time's concentric course 'midst Heaven's all-bounding years,
 Find law itself miraculous ; truth imbase
 On outward knowledge ; faith in the inmost conscience place ;
 Science supreme of things known, things believed,
 And, faith conceded, show truth as in God conceived.
 Kebes the tablet, here, of life mundane
 Unrolls, and pious troops leads toward the Eternal's fane ;
 Truth's temple on virtue's golden strata based
 And with the o'ersheltering roof of faith celestial graced.
 Prodicus, there, the path of righteous choice
 Points, manly, and confirms industrious virtue's voice,
 Fame promising 'gainst the lures of pleasurable vice,
 And treacherous indolence, perdition's normal price.
 Here, Aristotle's keen discursive sense,
 Ranging from tiniest life to pure omnipotence,
 All things defines, demonstrates Being's cause ;
 New moral rules propounds ; plans new illative laws.
 Here, to all wisdom's inexhaustible spring,
 His thirst for truth unslaked, brings, and e'er longs to bring,
 Tully, his mind receptive ; sifts his store ;
 Fines and refines, till all he owns is purest ore,
 Of polity, probity, right ; the chiefest good
 Soul can embrace, where'er in life, in death pursued.
 " Clear patriot shade," I said, " to the end of days,
 Thy land's applause, God's calm approof, hear, all men's praise."
 His dream august, here, Scipio verifies,
 And with star-ruling spirits resumes life's happiest ties
 Eternized ; oft from Cirque galactic led
 Hither, where patriot souls, one brotherly fellowhead,

Meet from all spheres. There, the lame Gyaran slave
 Basks before God, and bids, in face of fate, be brave,
 Earth's trembling orb ; basks, in the beam of God,
 Heaven's light intelligible, Himself his own abode ;
 Of his own law, Lord ; on Nature's ends relies,
 Truth, conscious rectitude ; still holds those only wise,
 Free, who, prepared alike to live or die,
 Their natural will with God's, so fate's, identify,
 Heaven's thrall, ere man's. With him, the imperial sage
 Joins hands ; man's inborn sense of God to every age
 Revealing ; our own being, misconceived,
 By us, asserts divine and proves what he believed.
 There, world-wise Seneca to shining throngs,
 God's presence shows by right to sinless soul belongs ;
 Still holds eternal bliss their boon, their prize,
 That love God, souls divine, their virtue deifies ;
 Proves coarsest passions may, by tact refined,
 Of duteousness and faith, broaden and exalt the mind ;
 And avarice even, by wondrous holihood
 Of spirit, be changed to greed of truth for all men's good ;
 Nor, from all error free, shall fallible mind,
 In any imperfect soul, howe'er towards God inclined,
 Avail all truth to compass, in whose view
 Man's best perfection is, perfection to pursue.
 Here, Apuleius, from sin's gross disguise
 Freed, shows now, hierophant of purest mysteries ;
 How soul, reborn, attains, despite its fall,
 Through self-wrought rise, a blessed reunion with the All
 Essential one. Plotinus, there, disrates
 His spirit no more, but oned with that he contemplates,
 In thought ecstatic, aims to sum the whole ;
 Man's vast particular, God's the universal soul.
 Here, Proclus glorying in all bliss to be,
 His spirit imbathes in deeps of fontal divinity.
 Euclides there, Ammonius, and a band
 Self-culled from various faiths, for one belief demand
 Access, in Heaven's wide temple, where all creeds
 Have each their separate shrine ; beneficence in deeds
 And love of God, the sole conditions claimed
 By that Immutable saint to whom the whole is named ;
 Who, all good, holds no rival foe in kind,
 But evil, a moral myth, impersonate of man's mind.
 Crowned with original innocence, never lost,
 A youthful spirit that late death's reflux tide had crossed,
 There, marked I, as through many a tempering sphere,
 Though scarcely changed, or made more spiritually clear,
 More amiable, she, with the immortal blessed,
 Up to serenest heights of pure perfection pressed.
 We both, in silent awe, as on they swept
 Upward, that band behold, who Heaven's immense e'er kept ;
 Their kindred's good, immortal in all spheres,
 Bent to achieve, where'er ill, transient even, appears ;

And as when dove or sea fowl o'er the sky
 Crossing, in myriads massed, show oft, to watchful eye,
 The shape each singly owns; the living cloud,
 Its flightful shadow upon the sea, eyed, cries aloud;
 So, but in guise angelic, and with song,
 Not less than that which soars sweet from the seraph throng,
 That host of light rejoiced as on they flew
 Upon their love-fraught quest; and so, like-joyed, we knew
 That, as some relieving force, the pride of kings,
 Makes towards its aim, nor rests its city rescuing wings,
 Vast, incontractile, till it gain its end;
 Routs the beleaguering foe; and makes a state its friend;
 Firm through all time; this mission, too, on high,
 Charged with God's grace, and urged by dear Humanity,
 Must, lastly, triumph. I, meantime (one glance
 Caught of a rayonnant form, which bent its countenance
 That moment towards us) following the angel's eye,
 Mark, as from bosom dropped of that bright host draw nigh
 Within our vision, every feature clear,
 The spirit all we have known, and of all known most dear.
 Drawn nigh, she vanished voiceless; if to impose
 Upon remembrance reticence, Heaven only knows,
 And she, in this, Heaven's confidant. Not one glance
 Strayed from that mien, till gone; when, first, I brake the trance;
 And cried, "Blessed spirit from first of sinless strain,
 Time's dimming dust shook off, gladden in thy source again;
 Clear, incontaminate flower of life, there live,
 Stern but towards self thou wouldst all others' faults forgive,
 As on earth, so in Heaven; there now, in right
 Of primitive purity, rise; rejoin thine Infinite."
 "Our finite ends," said Luniel, "we, meanwhile
 Had best prove; and rejoin Earth's far off spatial isle.
 Rejoice thou, too, companion through these skies,
 In glories ne'er before unveiled to mortal eyes,
 Of love, soul-educative; who sole hast viewed
 With what all various joys God hath these worlds endued;
 Which proved, prepare man's upward battling mind
 For nobler, loftier, bliss by the All-just designed."
 "Enough;" I answered. "All I have seen, and now,
 As a bird, that travelling far, yet still, his native bough
 Musing, 'mid Oran's palms, or Thracian plains,
 Towards Albion's lowliest eaves his sight instinctive strains,
 Some rustic cot to view, less fair than bowers,
 Where he with Spring might spend her borrowed summer hours;
 But ah! his birth-place; I, with all her woes,
 Her griefs, her faults, ask earth." "Be it," the angel said; "here
 close
 The sights thou hast glimpsed of spherul life. Always
 Ponder the truths these scenes mysteriously convey;
 And as each separate star, by fine degrees,
 Nature from taint chaotic and blind, wild, motion frees:
 So spirits dowered with virtuous sense of strife

Upwards, through all the ranks of firmamental life,
 Their faculties requicken at His great will,
 Who, schooling all in love, bids all His thoughts fulfil ;
 While these, in Heaven's new orders taught and trained,
 Their best reward e'er reap in duties love-constrained.
 For, not on stools of stateliest idleness,
 Shall God the immortal soul magnificently distress ;
 Nor, with monotonous viollings, disarrange
 Glad Nature's genial course of ever freshening change ;
 Not He shall doom man's everduring days
 To raptures dumb, nor thoughts unutterable of praise ;
 Nor dazzle with one ecstatic blaze the mind
 That burns, in active good, man's worthiest end to find ;
 God's loftiest love ; nor craves for ampler rest
 Than Virtue's meed demands, God in the heart possessed ;
 But progress, to the blessed, shall bliss contain,
 And, to the worst, give hope, through purifying pain,
 Remorse, repentance, self-regenerate will,
 Of good gained, virtue loved, loathed vice, abandoned ill.
 For, being is probation. Soul, on earth,
 In every testful sphere, must prove to God its worth,
 Its use of privileged powers ; and, free create,
 By its own act works out its ever instant fate ;
 And evil's darkness, what but possible light ?
 The field where conquering Truth wages her gracious fight."
 "Life, fire-chordlike," I said, "at once, both ways,
 Truth between God and man, and man and God convey,
 And, as in class, some teacher when he gains
 Full seizure of the minds he elevates while he trains ;
 And hurrying to impart the final word,
 Which shall to each convey ripe meaning of all heard,
 Hears, intercepted from his lips, let fall
 His own conclusive proof, conceived, expressed by all ;
 So man, long taught of Heaven through wisest strain,
 Speaks in one word his soul, 'tis life he would maintain ;
 Eternal life ; which worlds here, worlds on high
 Alike fail space for spirits' due expanse to supply ;
 All ours ; wherein through Nature's infinite years,
 Successive world-lives sloughed, the immortal reappears ;
 Man, finite deity ; who in meet employ
 God's will fulfils ; and so, all duty with all joy
 Blends, that in every sphere the spirit may see
 Clearlier, why being once regenerate, still should be
 Enamoured of perfection." "Do thou, then,
 Remembering God is God, and angels heavenly men,
 Men, earthly angels ; messengers, 'like sent
 His aims to enact, throughout the all lifeful firmament,
 Each like empowered, like missioned, His wise will
 In their divinest ends and noblest aims, fulfil
 Both, lifeful ; and all scare of death apart,
 Said Luniel, trust God's love ; trust wholly, and take heart ;
 Paul, Plato, seest not, live ; and Christ the skies

Crowns ; dread not thou, dear soul, to join the all good and wise.
 Whose end is so to assimilate to His own
 All spirits, that Love-inspired, they share His boundless throne.
 Now must we hence. I know thou wilt forget
 Too much thou hast learned ; 'tis thus men aggrandise the debt
 How needlessly, to God's good grace they owe
 Eagering this, that, to learn, then that they learn, unknow.
 This, and thou dost, so keenlier shalt thou feel
 The oblivious art God's pity alone avails to heal,
 What anguish, shame and horror shall be thine
 To have hooded thine own eyes to hide the light divine
 The law of conscious freedom, every breast
 Holds from God's hallowing hands ; Fate bids me spare the rest.
 But Heaven may aid, enhance ; nor shall the care
 Of one sweet spirit thou least dreamst of, forsake thee, there."
 "Whate'er the ill I do, the dread to dree
 These ills foretold, I said, may haply advantage me.
 So would I urge once more, ere yet I lose
 All touch, all sight of these, these bright soul-gladdening views."
 "Look, then, once more ; behold these happier spheres,
 Where soul grown strong by lapse of ever lengthening years,
 All sin and sin's punishment, every trace
 Of trespass in the spirit, permitted such to efface,
 Effectually erased, the enfranchised force,
 Rejoicing to renew its upward, heavenward, course
 With faculties refined, sublimed, made pure,
 And glad no more the scorns of Ignorance to endure,
 While wink the fates ; He lingering to fulfil
 His ends, 'gainst all who mock, or trust to balk his will ;
 Who drew from out the depths of His delight
 All Being, to make and share His pleasure infinite ;
 Who gave the key of law ; law is but love
 Directed and defined to ends all law above,
 He only can ensure, who, rational soul,
 Makes answerable to Him whose love inarms the whole ;
 The law of truth, right, virtue ; means are these
 Life's loftiest aims to achieve, soul's happiest potencies.
 When in the lapse of ages, time's great year
 Fulfilled, the disciplined soul shows perfect, peaceful, clear,
 All life shall be renewed, and man's great race
 Transfigured, bide in Heaven, God's spiritual embrace."
 "But say," said I, "what loftiest end is ours,
 Angel's or man's ; does soul attain celestial powers ?"
 "What end at last the principle divine
 Shall win, like regal heir exiled, until combine,
 Through depurative tests, life's every end
 Perfective ; and, till proved God's champion, liege, and friend,
 The inmost heavens it gain, where, time by time,
 Convoked, the hierarchies of blessed souls sublime,
 Rule and sustain, with Him who willed, the whole ;
 God will, himself, impart to man's affiliate soul.
 We now address us to depart ; and I,

Contempling with dismay the black and vacuous sky
 Below our feet, held back, till half compelled
 By the angel Power ; when, high before us, I beheld,
 Not marked till then, a tower broad based, sublime
 Ten-staged, each stage a star. "Lo ! this the tower of Time,"
 Said the Angel, " which to ascend and gain one view
 Encyclic, of the spheres, we have light-borne, lightened through,
 Thy soul may strengthen for the nearing strife
 Never to close till Heaven gives rest to spiritual life."
 This climbing, sphere by sphere, on the upmost stance
 Old Time we viewed who thence his worlds in one broad glance,
 All in his ken, surveyed ; and though to few
 Orbs, and those aged, he speaks, yet he the angel knew ;
 The angel, him. Still wist not I their tongue ;
 Preglacial, it might be, when moons were always young.
 But Luniel says, he moaned that while his head
 And feet felt froze as ice, his heart was molten lead ;
 And that, she told him, never since the hour
 He first the heavens convinced of his rapacious power,
 When, from the breast of earth's maternal orb,
 The spherelet, whose pure paths her guiding cares absorb,
 Was rudely wrung ; and, (but that ruth divine,
 All bettering, bade the lost upon the loser shine,
 To cheer her night ; there had been sore discontent,
 With Time's remorseless rule, through all the firmament)
 His cruel act she never had forgot,
 Howbeit all holy God had sanctified her lot."
 To which he answered, " He no vain regret
 Feigned for aught crook'd of course. God all would straighten
 yet ;
 And now that doom's long reign had once begun,
 Few were the hours ere night should fold all, sun by sun ;
 Eternity resume creative right,
 And stud all heaven with stars intelligible of light."
 Then, bidding Time farewell, which he, meseemed,
 Took ill, as from his eyen a piteous malice gleamed ;
 And marking where the welkin-cleaving ring
 Our sunpath meets ; and all earth destined spirits doth bring,
 (In their prejudged descent to assume the cloak
 Of body, wherein abide all who endure life's yoke,)
 To the fields they dwell in many a year, the gates
 We neared, where sunlified soul fulfils and earns its fates,
 Through vast futurity ; and towards the same
 Star-chapter'd pointing, I, " behold our way," exclaim.
 " Not by God's gates," said the Angel, " we depart ;
 We, mean and shadowy things, as I am, and thou art ;
 Not as reborn, assured ; nor pure, untried ;
 Nor as on His palms our names God's hands bare sanctified ;
 But, as beseems us more, through yon bright valves
 The southening sun's broad gates, who space's splendid halves
 Distinguishing, in one sole service binds,
 With his and angel's, man's, all ancillary minds ;

Servants, but elevated, the laws, the ways
 Of His great house to enforce, all rational life obeys."
 Her loveable teaching, full of hope and awe,
 Completing, as our feet fast towards those portals draw,
 Paused Luniel ; and descending, hand in hand,
 Our starry quests we cease, quit that ætherial land ;
 As when with instant impulse down the sky
 Shoot, on November's eve, twin meteors from on high.
 "Grant me," said I, as on our swiftening course
 We sped, like lightning rays shot from some sunny source ;
 "One boon, dear spirit ; if, as to me appears
 These souls I have seen have ages, long since lived, or years
 Full many ; and many a hopeful lustre passed,
 As deathless, wise, all sense of grosser sins have cast ;
 And purifying penance, with one pang,
 Long drawn, hath 'scaped, unscathed, from error's fatal fang.
 Into these homes of truth and holy joy,
 Perfective, apt henceforth times endless to employ ;
 Souls, glorying now in liberty of state,
 Freed from the bonds of sin, of law the irrational hate,
 Of conscious conflict 'gainst God's love, the strong
 Wrestler who throws all ill, and slays the giant, wrong ;
 Yet wouldst assent now, I their state would view,
 ('Neath thy world-shadowing wing) who live but life to rue ;
 By error yet so guiled, and by the event
 Of selfish sin unchanged, impure, impenitent."
 "This may not be, I know not why, as yet
 Know but it is forbid ; nor do, nor dare forget
 What were to brave prohibitive law, replied
 In tenderest tone, (earth glimpsed that moment,) the angel guide.
 Beings and scenes less blessed than these be, I
 Love not. With other aid tempt thou earth's nether sky,
 Dimmed by one world, I know ; where spirits accursed
 By their own acts or lusts, manfiend or demon erst,
 God's justice satiate through the burning sense
 Of his pure law contemned, due penitence for offence
 Needing, ere, lifed again with freedom, light
 Intelligible, with love and conscious sense of right,
 Man, Heaven may face, or any spherial kind
 Blessed with belief in God, and crowned with reasoning mind ;
 This, knowing still, life's future end, far less
 To expiate evil passed, than e'er in good progress.
 For the rational world God made his mirror first ;
 And his own image 'twas, till man by sin self-cursed,
 Shattering in countless selfs the semblance fine,
 Made unreflective dust of once one whole divine.
 Souls that love God, His heaven our hearts within,
 That here by love and good towards man, and hate of sin,
 Most thrive, are they for whom His heavenly rest
 On high He saves, and folds in his eternal breast.
 But thou, to earth returned, forget not there,
 What here thou hast seen, though store of sorrow be thy share.

Speak to thy fellow souls all hope, all joy ;
 Seek life's most pure delights in mercy's mild employ.
 The lapsing tear slight not ; nor penitent sigh
 Check, earnest of the intent to turn to him most high ;
 The orgies of false faith forsake, false life,
 For spiritual commune with heaven, of rapture rife ;
 Forswear life's follies for man's bettering cause ;
 And learn, by practice stern, soul's self redemptive laws.
 For, not in spatial acts of earth and main ;
 Not in the vaulted dome of heaven's star-lighted fane,
 Not in the spring-tide breath of buds and flowers,
 Nor growth of grain or fruit, sense we the All-holy's powers ;
 Not in the rise of dews, nor suns that shine
 Glimpse we the escapeful proof of cause, or will, divine ;
 But know, it is in the laws of things which bound
 Our thoughts of time, space, earth, His all-presence is found ;
 Laws moral and material, which through space,
 Binding all earthlike spheres have each like needful place ;
 Good, thus, o'er ill, o'er wrong right, God's great cause,
 One with himself, disspread essential through all laws,
 Of sensible Nature ; measure, number, weight,
 Identic in all orbs, one mind must predicate ;
 One nature argue : acting towards one end,
 From a like motivated cause all worlds may apprehend ;
 That motive, good and joy : His own and theirs
 He hath made, as he with all the bliss of Being shares ;
 God uncomprised of soul, yet in all hearts ;
 Immeasurable ; without all sign, all form, all parts ;
 Unsearched for, unknown ; till besought, severe ;
 To penitent soul, sin stained, pure love without all fear.
 And his redemptive process, one and same,
 Self betterment, in all worlds, trust in his only name ;
 Such, too, the workful fellowship he asks
 Of soul create, in this its holiest of all tasks.
 Behold, then, spread through universal space,
 One rational world, finite, reflective of God's face,
 Though in limited guise : His consciousness like vast
 With all made, things to come, things present and things passed,
 Still proves demonstrable to reasoning powers,
 Free, fraught with love of truth, and sense of fact, like ours ;
 For, as by sense, like man's, though finer far,
 The ethereal tribes commune, each in its native star,
 While time's essential truths, whate'er their range
 Established, absolute are, and can nor cease, nor change ;
 And spatial objects, various guised, pure mind,
 Though bounded, all-where sees, consimilar in kind ;
 If, simply one, say, gravity's, law, but show,
 Then number, measure, light, night, time and distance, know ;
 Then, moral pressure, truth, eternal law,
 Immortal life, man's mind, is justified to draw ;
 And reason, compass-like, through all the skies,
 Points to His work, one whole, through countless ministries,

Moral, material, spiritual, divine.

Our substance is His shadow." "Oh ! be it ever mine,
This track of light thou hast traced amidst the sky,
Prophetic of life's fate, and human destiny ;
This starry clue, to steer by, through the maze
Of unconclusive time, innumerable of days."
Nay, not innumerable. Impends from birth,
Said the Angel guide, " the fate which hounds thee into earth ;
Yet not therefore with death terrestrial ends
The testing time of souls, wherein may make amends
Sin for its wrong, as urged by justest doom,
Or blameworthy neglect find fitting time, and room
World-wide, to improve. To foster gifts God-given,
To all, spare not ; but train Despair's own soul towards Heaven ;
As some kind hand the storm-dashed rose bids rise ;
Face sunward, and recalls to live with winds and skies ;
While morrowing heaven, resprinkling with the dews,
Baptismal of the stars, regenerate life renews.
Go, now, compeer of all we have seen and passed,
That spirit may serve to expand, and, wisely brace, at last,
The soul to arm for that anearning strife,
Never to close, till Heaven gives rest to pilgrim life ;
As, through the skiey wilderness, wandering aye,
Mine all enlightening orb ; thou, on thy worldly way ;
Go, now, expert of all the all teaching skies,
Veil or unveil, of mind's immortal mysteries ;
Initiate, go, consummate in all tests
Divinest love demands, and rational faith suggests ;
Go, aspirant of perfection ; and, in earth,
And in thine own heart, seek all Heaven prescribes of worth ;
Know virtue always loved of God ; all where,
Truth and good, one and same, in Heaven, as earth. Whate'er
Is good and true with man, earth, angel soul,
True is and good, to God, and where Heaven's last orbs roll ;
Know conscious wrong too, sin ; and evil will,
And evil act, in all God's moral world, 'like ill.
But go ; thou never, till life's space be passed,
Wilt 'vail to trace God's plan divine, from first to last.
Plan which created mind's whole thought transcends.
Source of its every power, sum endless of all ends."
This said, she, poisoning her space-cheering wings,
Earth touched, there left me, where first on celestial things
Musing, I, questioned, asked her aid ; and where
She first had bid me breathe, with her, celestial air ;
Left me, in sacred silence more endowed
With meaning than all words could tell, though thunder-loud.

HELEN. Silence may be best speaks experience.

STUDENT.

Experience of an age may yield an hour's
Contentment ; of an hour, an age's awe.

FESTUS. It is nature's silent miracles most convince,
Most bless, most elevate the soul.

HELEN. And yet
While doubtless these experiences the passed
And present, tend to reconcile with ends
Future, still much inexplicable remains,
Of ordinary existence, and the fates
Suffered in soul, in person here.

STUDENT. Perchance
We expiate here in pains faults of passed lives ;
And all our joys are but rewards.

FESTUS. It may be,
We meet with mysteries everywhere in life,
That, could we solve !—As oft, 'mid ruffling seas,
A wave path, clear, scarce tremulous, we discern,
Seeming significative ; which neither knows
Beginning of extension, nor fixed end ;
Which marches not with cliff on high, nor reef
Below ; to no cloud answers ; no vague keel
Cut accidentally ; nor desultory gust
Scored ; but e'er exquisite to the wondering eye,
Searchful of all substantive cause, so close
To the secret truth we burn once, keeps in calm
Tenacity, its unfathomed force of form ;
Until, the gaze glanced off, tired, or divert
Casually, we miss, nor ever can regasp
The grand identity ; so, too, 'mid the world,
We trace, we think, at times, God's ways, the more
Pondered, the plainlier manifest ; but through
Fatuity, or mere mutable conceit,
Faith's failure, or what not ? we lose in life's
Wide weltering waste, the track, which followed, might
Have led, if not to perfectness, to peace.

HELEN. Methinks, I, too, have missed this perfect way,
Else wherefore am I troubled this to know
Or that, when knowing is so vastlier less
Than being ? And can it be, I am being here
Tested and proved through life ? Cares great, cares small,
Indifferent, trusted to me hour by hour,
And note of treatment taken ? It cannot be,
And yet it may. One's faith indeed so warns
It is. Who sins against his better light
Sins sadly. Still the sense oppresses one
Of life so cast.

STUDENT. Nay, here are twain will vouch
Thy perfectness, at least ; and 'gainst all comers.

HELEN. Hush ! Seest thou none beside thee ?

FESTUS. Who is here ?
I parted from thee, but an hour ago.

STUDENT. I left thee but an hour since.

FESTUS. Why so soon ?

LUCIFER. So soon ? I have traversed earth.

FESTUS. Ah, good ! no more.
Let us within, friends. Soon the stars and dews

Will take our places. Pray, precede, dear Helen
Enchant, thou canst—thy company ; so that me
They miss not for an hour, or twain.

HELEN. But how
Deceive myself ?

FESTUS. Forget me, too.

HELEN. That word
Deserves no answer.

STUDENT. None ?

FESTUS. Adieu !

HELEN. Be sure,
When next we meet, we'll be less grave.

STUDENT. Meanwhile,
To tasks beneficent, Festus, we, reserved,
Let haste. Earth's hopes at length are ripening fast,
If hiddenly, to happier ends than bard,
Saint, social seer, or politic sage e'er dreamed.
One brief creed, simple and of necessity true ;
One moral code, in every land the same ;
Which, justice realized, shall be each man's good,
And all men's joy ; one law ; one general rule ;
The world one state, and peace perpetual.

MARIAN. Heaven
Grant it may be !

FESTUS. I come. Good friend, do thou
The requisite dispositions to these ends
Prepare. I follow.

STUDENT. I obey.

FESTUS. And now
Wherefore hast sought me here ?

LUCIFER. But this to say
Summoned to farthest space for a time, I come
Hail, and farewell to bid thee.

FESTUS. Nay, not thus
Part we. I would with thee.

LUCIFER. Reflect.

FESTUS. I do.
I would see Heaven.

LUCIFER. Behold !

FESTUS. I would enter Heaven.
LUCIFER. Retire into thyself ; heart consecrate
And sanctified in soul.

FESTUS. I would see God.

LUCIFER. He is the Invisible.

FESTUS. And I ?

LUCIFER. Thou art
The Insatiable. Arise with me.

FESTUS. I rise.

XXI.

Law moral one and same all being imbounds,
 Compresses, animates, even as natural law
 The orb, of light and gravity. Where is soul,
 There fallibility, choice, and righteous doom,
 Following, of deity. To the bodiless realms
 Such abstracts apt, sights spiritually recalled
 Our travellers tell; of visioned miracles, this,
 All parent nature sees through, not as God
 Eternal, but aye immanent in his thought,
 Whole impress of the all-creative cause;
 Of world-faiths that, each, in itself all truth
 Boasting, truth sole; its practices foul or vain,
 Declaring heaven-imposed, to heaven unknown,
 Save by its wrath. Good will, good deed, towards man,
 To none confined, in all, like blessed of God,
 Like honoured know. To man a prescient view
 Of what is true repentance, to the soul
 Yet to be realized, spirit-informed, expands.
 Heaven's judgments are the spiritual harmonies
 On virtues based, the same with earth's, which show
 To creatures God's great sceptre justified,
 In every sphere. The penitence for sin
 God loves, is after holiness of life.

Interstellar Space.

FESTUS and LUCIFER.

LUCIFER. Mark'st thou this vast half-luminous orb we coast,
 Not sun, not star?

FESTUS. I note it, and so much
 Admire I would see more of 't.

LUCIFER. It is a world
 God is in act of making. Life not yet
 Lifts up her head. Sole, order, first of things,
 Begins to arrange the elements.

FESTUS. There are signs
 'Twill be a world where all felicitous ends
 Designed by God may be fulfilled; a sphere
 Midway 'twixt earth and heaven; a common ground
 Where deity and humanity may unite
 Forces, and more effect than either 'lone.

LUCIFER. Theories so many, and like this, I have seen
 Fall through sheer lack of base, one might despair
 Less sanguine than myself. Meanwhile though swift
 Our transit, time is ours to hold converse.
 Hast aught upon thy mind to impart, or ask?

FESTUS. My life is massed with miracles. Wheresoe'er
 I be, visions are mine; and late entranced
 Some angel surely, upon mine inner eyne,
 Life's chart preliminary unrolled, at last,
 Ended with painting heaven.

LUCIFER. Ere yet expert,

Repeat, 'twere doubtless curious, false or true.

FESTUS. Right veritable it is, I trust, if peace
And love and charity are where most God is.

LUCIFER. Say on. It will while our way through this extense,
Dreamlike, itself.

FESTUS. Many, the greatest, truths
Man hath acquired in visions, or in dreams.
For then it is the soul recalls the spheres
Of pre-existent nature, and evokes
The ghosts of coming ages, or, unites
Passed, present, future by one windlike touch,
Which loosens the world's zone, and renders mind
The master of creation. So with me
Once proved it, in a vision ; for the crown
Of nature is passivity, and man's
Best mood the pure recipient ; in a state
Of twilight-like existence, as when light,
Darkness, sun, moon, earth, sky were nigh all one
Universal substance ; nought distinct save souls,
Echoes of light intelligible, towards heaven
Reacting. Matter, mind the All now comprise
In contrary perfections, as the twin
Tide-wave inarms the world ; the total round
Of effluent life, or influent ; this eterne,
That, temporal ; known to some, with power and means
Commemorative, of old, endowed, and now,
To him who words the wonders he hath seen.
It was the spirit of the universe
In whose deep breast as on twin founts of life
The worlds of heaven were nourished, I beheld.
The fragrance of heaven's fadeless fields, her breath,
The endless blessings of an act of grace,
Or mercy's matron bosom, filled her words :
And each articulate syllable she expired,
Seemed with the lore of ages laden, as earth
O'erheavily with her old baptismal flood.
Her eye profound, which dazed so mine at first,
I scarce might see, immortal quiet homed ;
As though all heaven had settled upon one star.
She spake, and I regarded with such awe
As eaglet, when he first beholds the sun :
And though what I recall be true, so far
As worded, it is less than truth ; for how
Can a spar utter how it was crystallized ?
She spake, I said, the spirit, and at her word,
Behold the heavens were opened as a book,
'I am the world soul, nature's spirit am I.
Ere universe was or constellation, space,
System, or sun, or orb, or element,
Darkness, or light, or atomie, I first lived ;
I and necessity, though twain in life,
Yet one in essence. God is men exist.

Man and all finite natures among themselves
 Act freely ; between God, and man and all
 Nature finite, to this unknown, is fate :
 What is divine is of necessity free.'
 I heard and I received ; and from my soul
 Intense in quiet, perfect in repose,
 Like sleep's fantastic frostwork, all the sense
 Melted of death ; and the heaven-surrounding state
 Entering, of pure existence among gods,
 It grew ignited with divinity.
 Again the world-soul voiced itself ; and I
 Indrank the fruitful glories of her words,
 As earth consumes the golden skiey clouds.
 'Two books there are which must be read ; the one,
 The elements exist as leaves in ; worlds
 As symbols ; earth, thus, of humanity ;
 Water of spirit, fire of divinity,
 And air of all things ; stars the truths of heaven.
 Water and fire are elements divine ;
 Earth and air, human ; heaven and the soul
 From one proceed, and the blue-heated skies ;
 Out of the other bodihood and abode.
 Judge doubtful things by certainest ; things dark
 By what is clear, and dangerous by safe ;
 And prophesy to all which live of God,
 Their aboriginal heaven, and total end
 Of spirit in his just love. Of soul, believe,
 The other tome I spake of, that man's flesh
 His spirit not trulier holds, than in divine
 Nature, its contrary, God's infinite soul
 Imbounds the universe : thine infinite work
 But infinitely less than thee, O God !
 The universe is simple ; God and I.
 Cause and effect are all that in it is,
 And more ; for cause containeth its effect.
 Cause, operation and effect are God,
 Nature and man ; which both partake of one.
 Through error human souls accept the truth,
 As through distorting air the light whereby
 They live, of sun or starlet. Through the world
 The soul receives God, but from God the soul
 Receives the spirit, the chosen thus, thus the world ;
 The cloud-led many, the star-guided wise.
 For spirit it is makes times and nature clear,
 As of old water purified by fire.'
 Methought I answered, as it might be, thus :
 ' Life, like a floating islet, comes and goes,
 We know not, mean not how. From heaven a star
 Falls, and we track a cold dark somethingness,
 In our conception as unlike all birth
 Celestial, astral issue even, as wind
 Is unlike wisdom, thunder unlike snow.

We know but that we are, not how, not why.
 The distance between finite, howsoe'er
 Great, and the infinite being infinite,
 Our life shows incomplete and sectional ;
 And the large unity of the whole, while sought
 From morn all musical to blank starred night,
 In mind to realize, soon, too soon we see
 The wolf-like shadow of death which shameless haunts
 With spectre-like eclipse the vital orb,
 Creep o'er life's path, and threatening total dark
 The fiery marrow freeze of the vauntful world.'
 While yet these words were vibrant on my tongue,
 I saw the sun-god stall his flamy steeds
 In customary splendour ; these, in turn,
 Shaking their lightning trappings off to earth,
 And snatching a few golden grains of sleep,
 Solaced them with their corner in the west ;
 Towards where earth uplifts her crystal crown,
 White with all yearèd snows and radiant rime ;
 While, ever and again, the dancing morn,
 Even in the mid abyss of solar night,
 With roseate blaze impowers the shining skies,
 And pure prismatic fire that lights the stars.
 Stretching her hand into the nebulous depths
 Of space eterne, again the spirit spake.
 'As the æthereal essence of the world,
 Matter thereof mere increment, I of earth
 Speak to thee now ; for, as one Father is
 Of all things, and of spirit all act is born,
 So, of one substance is all nature made.
 Regard not earth as the whole universe ;
 Nor minify yet the orb into a point
 Where all relations vanish. Earth receives
 In an immortal influence, from the stars,
 And out of her bright and generative heart,
 To all conceived and born therefrom, gives back
 The vital virtues of the potent heavens,
 With their invisible radiance filling up
 The interspatial skies. To all the forms
 Of plant, fish, brute, bird, insect he who made
 Gives, from life's infinite estate, renewal
 Ceaseless in mass ; to man, soul-crowned, alone
 Revival personal ; 'mong each other ; all
 Differing in eminence. Some excel ; the rest
 Suffer not therefore. Wrong to none is wrought
 By honour to a high peculiar few,
 Self-meritless, whose sole position stands
 By themselves ingenerable. Exists this class
 Eclect in all things living ; best in man ;
 In whom heaven's motional harmonies, the world's
 Elemental workings, nay the spirit pure
 Of fire impassible, and æthereal, all

Incorporate are, in sunlike excellency.
 All men, as sons of man, be sons of God ;
 Yet all like portion nor position have,
 In earth, nor heaven : of common promises
 Heirs, not like perfectness, nor privilege.
 Change arts of earth ; the science of the skies,
 Immutable, the first man learned of God,
 Is elder than the sun ; hath hallowed all
 Successive firmaments ; revealed to man,
 Whose soul-star inly burns with living light,
 Who holds the constellations in his hand,
 Sign manual of his God, and brief of fate,
 Truth highest speaks, and certainties most blessed.
 Souls these of luminous birth who penetrate
 The core of all best wisdom, know all truth
 Hath central commune with the infinite ;
 All faith with truth ; thus kingly, till with God
 United, and the heavenly fulness shared.
 With carnal minds to outward worship prone
 And ordinances the spirit race of light,
 Consummate in truth's secret discipline, use
 But saintly silence, knowing all, of all
 Themselves incognizable, but souls who love
 Virtue and God. Souls conscious, self convict,
 Of wrong and ill ; through trial, to be proved ;
 Through peril, purified from inbred sin ;
 From surface righteousness ; from faith in gods
 Many and false ; from scorn of the one true ;
 From gross and giant passions ; souls who roam
 Life's wilderness, idolatrous, and believe
 Their record of perfective life their proof
 Of power to save themselves ; but these the elect
 Of nature, peers of paradise, pitying, serve.
 Men are of one kind, therefore, two sorts. All
 Shall find desire unite with destiny.
 For those, as said ; for these, though all the powers
 Of air array themselves in lines of fire,
 And arm them with death's armoury ; though hell's
 Hosts camp them, high as tented mountains round ;
 Yet, at a wave of his hand, like to slaves,
 They vanish from the assiegement of the saints :
 Spirits which, dominations incarnate,
 And sons of stars that darting out of heaven,
 Made themselves mortal for the mother's sake ;
 Here, with original motion, fling off truths
 Of perfect light, oracular even of God ;
 Truths in their minds who worthily receive,
 Of inborn virtue full, accomplative
 Of wisdom ; and like heaven's luminous rudiments,
 Which gradually may gravitate to worlds,
 Corroborate their nature, and make free
 Their souls to course through the blank void of time,

To the bright fulness of eternity.
 Beyond, too, souls unnumberable, unnamed,
 And orbs all named, all numbered, mortal, know
 These be the great initials of the world :
 Being is one, the central infinite, cause
 Common to both creator and create,
 The great substantive essence of the whole.
 Knowing and doing and the fact of form,
 Laws co-existent of its modal life.
 The natural creation ended, first
 Commenced the spiritual, which in God ever
 Aforetime lived, thus time unfolds the seed
 Sown in eternity, and reaped therein :—
 The great paternal and invisible fire
 Which eateth that it issueth, and wherein,
 Being an infinite means as well as end,
 All filiated nature ceaseth work.
 Now matter makes not one continuous ox,
 Nor is light all-where massed alike : the stars,
 Like thunderbolts perradiate, clustered stand
 Or, separative, seek systems omniform.
 God is the sole and self-subsistent one ;
 From him, the sun-creator, nature was ;
 Æthereal essences, all elements,
 The souls therein indigenous, and man
 Symbolic of all being. Out of earth
 The matron moon was moulded, and the sea
 Filled up the shining chasm : both now fulfil
 One orbit and one nature, and all orbs
 With them one fate, one universal end.
 From light's projective moment, in the earth
 The moon was, even as earth i' the sun ; the sun
 A fiery incarnation of the heavens.
 When sun, earth, moon again make one, resumes
 Nature her heavenly state ; is glorified.
 As, to the sleepless eye, form forth, at last,
 The long immeasurable layers of light,
 And beams of fire enormous in the east,
 The broad foundations of the heaven domed day
 All fineless as the future, so uprose
 On mine the great celestial certainty.
 The mask of matter fell off, I beheld,
 Void of all seeming, the sole substance mind,
 The actualized ideal of the world.
 An absolutest essence filled my soul ;
 And superseding all its modes and powers,
 Gave to the spirit a consciousness divine ;
 A sense of vast existence in the skies ;
 Boundless commune with spiritual light, and proof
 Self-shown, of heaven commensurate with all life.
 And I to the light of the great spirit's eyes
 Mine hungry eyes returned which, past the first

Intensifying blindness, clearer saw
 The words she uttered of triumphant truth.
 For truly, and as my vision heightened, lo !
 The universal volume of the heavens,
 Star-lettered in celestial characters,
 Moved musically into words her breath framed forth
 And varied momentarily ; and I perceived
 That thus she spake of God : I silent still
 And hearkening to the sea-swell of her voice.
 ' From one divine, all permanent unity comes
 The many and the infinite ; from God all just
 To himself and others, who to all is love,
 Earth and the moon, like syllables of light,
 Uttered by him, were with all creatures blessed
 By him, and with a sevenfold blessing sealed
 To perfect rest, celestial order ; all
 The double tabled book of heaven and earth,
 Despite such due deficiency as cleaves
 Inevitably to soul, till God resume,
 Progressive aye, possessing too all bliss
 Elect and universal in the heavens.'
 And silence settled on me deeper still,
 Like a snow-muffled statue.

LUCIFER. Need was none
 To speak.

FESTUS. Again, as a gale of light, the spirit
 Me wholly in her assumed, so that the words
 I heard, like cloudless thunder, wrought in me
 Meet apperception of the source of things.
 ' God, first and last of being, from out whose hand
 Came all things sensible and eternal, all
 Forth flowing from, and ebbing back to, him,
 Creation's God, regeneration's lord ;
 And holy recognizance of their sum and end.
 Man's Saviour, like his Maker, must be God.
 And, all effect commensurate with its cause,
 Each infinite, creation stands redeemed
 By him first, last, and mediate, God in all.
 Full in the bosom of humanity, he
 As on the waters of the imperfect world,
 Came down, the God-spirit, thus in soul uniting
 The mortal and eterne, and in one word,
 Foreuttered ere all time, which legendwise
 Still rounds the world, though nigh obliterate now
 The best part,—immortality,—gave the key
 All mansions opening of paternal heaven.'
 ' Thy name, O Immortality,' here, I said,
 ' Sounds clear essential music, through the soul
 Thrilling, as through the heartstrings of a star,
 In air and sphere-form yet inconsummate,
 Its tidal pulses and dim throbs of light,
 Ere fraternized in heaven, yet presage sure

In hope, of state to come ; yea, round that hope
 So vast yet vague, which, like the northern morn,
 One hour usurps the mid-sky, and the next
 Lies buried 'neath the pole, are gathered thoughts
 And truths whose gravity oft determine life ;
 As motion in an atomie leads at last
 To a world's orbit, mote and motion given.
 For spirit, self-conscious of its inner life,
 Makes all externals subject, and o'er thoughts
 And things, maintains that rule which in itself,
 Is present proof of what the soul most seeks ;
 Its boundless union with its God.' Then she,
 The world-divining spirit, even as a star
 O'erflows with light, still spake of deity. 'God,
 Untermable in essence, being unnamed,
 Men grasping ever at his love, his name
 Man-given, in pious perpetuity breathe,
 And strive to throw thought-light by act reflex
 On being, originative of life and thought,
 In hope to know the great unknowable,
 In fulness ; he in mercifulness known
 Only to spirit create in any sphere ;
 The all prothetic universal I.
 Substantive of all being ; whose sole word
 Will infinite expressing, all effect,
 Within whose ample essence all concept
 Respecting it, as good, intelligence, life,
 Man born, or angel-mind can frame, is lost
 Like a stray gust, which from some æry height,
 Soars, suicidal, up the dark inane.

LUCIFER. Pardon ; but say, this speaking vision, how long
 Endured it ?

FESTUS. Nay, I know not ; hours, it may be,
 Moments, perhaps. I was, in truth, entranced.

LUCIFER. Ne'er had I one but once. Ask not, in turn,
 How long mine lasted ; mine hath lasted me
 Thousands of years, in sooth ;—I need but shut
 Mine eyes, and see it now—and then, I saw
 Looking as might be casually towards earth,
 Man's sphere, the horizon black with numberless crowds.
 Midst these uprose a mountainous altar, shaped
 Like a vast inverted pyramid, whereby stood
 Four forms stern, solemn : one arrayed in white,
 And one in uniformal black ; in green,
 The third, and of all hues the fourth. And most
 I marked at first, the two first named. All bliss
 Each claimed, as his alone, denouncing one
 The other ; both all warning that fierce fire
 Burned for their sake who sware not by a creed
 Garbled, patched up, and contradictory ; text
 Confounding oft with comment ; by no rule
 Interpretative bound ; as literal, now,

Now figurative, construing laws like plain.
 Love, said this pair, nathless, from first to last,
 Its author's nature being, infinite love
 To mortal man, his motive sole ; their creeds
 And deeds, as arctic from antarctic wide.
 At either side they stood, and pressed the world ;
 And honestly and right earnestly prayed all men
 To serve God ; their incongruous laws obey ;
 Accept of heaven's free grace ; and something do
 To help the Omnipotent how to save a soul.
 And myriads sought their several priestly sides,
 And did as was enjoined them, and rejoiced.
 Then something passed between them ; and the twain,
 Ceasing opponent duarchy, atoned
 In friendship for past enmity, and straight
 Culling all contraries from holy grounds,
 Built up an idol, of all elements,
 Most disaccordant. Thus, his deathly feet
 They framed of fire, of earth his lower limbs,
 His breast of mass terraqueous ; his head, air ;
 Varying with strange and mutable-featured clouds.
 Round him, enthroned on the broad and upturned base
 Of that earth-piercing altar-pyramid,
 They reared at last, earth aiding in all modes,
 A circular temple, patent to the sun ;
 Sea-lavèred ; mountain-columned ; kingdom-paved.
 When as he sat his throne, there rose a shout
 From the foregathered multitudes, which caused
 The circumspatial skies shake, cold with dread,
 And to her inmost base earth vibrate. He
 In his right hand held the sun and moon, close-linked .
 And in his left a wingèd orb cross-crowned ;
 By his side hung down, curved comet-wise, a sword
 Of fire ; a rosary of unluminous stars
 Decked either wrist. With stars his breast was mailed
 Like to a knight's of old, with scales steel-gilt ;
 Or like an ice-plant with perpetual dew ;
 Or diamond beetle, round beglobed with light :
 And the unsphered skies darkened momentarily.
 To him was brought, bound hand and foot, the world,
 Which more intensely worshipped than the poor
 Bewildered devotee in eastern lands
 His golden squatting idols, diamond-eyed,
 Whose car grinds human dust. The monarch, there,
 Upon that central shrine where sate the god,
 Laid down his crown ; the warrior cast his sword ;
 The peer, his glittering badge ; the merchant prince,
 His hoarded coffer. There, the statesman placed
 His seal of power ; the priest, his robe ; the bard,
 And the harmonious master, lyre, and pen.
 Who soar, or mine, in science, or in art,

Their elements and implements and gifts ;
 The scribe, and the physician, and the wright,
 His several offering. Thither hied the crowds
 Of mediate millions between gain and toil ;
 Thither the brawny-armed and brown-browed hind
 Whose wealth was in his will and daily work,
 Repaired ; and earth's luxurious, toilless, tribes
 Followed ; each with his hand full of good things,
 And felt their conscience lightened ; blessed their lot ;
 And all went well, and ended happily.
 Round that great altar, thousand lesser were,
 With crowds ringed each, though each the hate and scorn
 Of the majestic pair who served the highest,
 And sware to make all souls believe alike,
 In clockwork-like content. Yet might they not
 The many most succeed. The great few fail.
 Some of belief thought most, of practice some,
 Some thought of God as darkness, some as light
 And worshipped each ; some held that space was God ;
 While others said, and wiselier, God is what ?
 Some held that deity, and all heavenly powers
 Were of one essence like divine and high,
 Even as the starry commonwealth of heaven.
 These deemed that, wholly contemplating God,
 The soul, suffused in deity, required
 No active virtue, but on God's own breast
 Lay lulled in glory and in communitive
 Life with divinity, its best end fulfilled.
 These deemed whate'er is done by men is done
 By God's spirit, and they thence conclude no sin
 Exists, unless to those who so esteem ;
 And that to live without all doubt or dread
 Were to restore to life the paradise
 Initiate of the soul, that pleasant place
 Erst disafforested, and so realize
 The catholic salvation of the world.
 Some held that, now and then, there speaks in all
 The word of God, his light enlightening all,
 If not resisted carnally. Some adjudged
 The evil of sin and punishment alike
 Reflected, if eterne, on rule divine.
 Some that man's spirit had once forelived in heaven,
 A holy creature, but that sinning, earth
 Was its amercement made, its prison, flesh ;
 Emerging whence, it shall by grace resume
 Its pre-existence and high powers.

FESTUS.

In dreams

Doubtless, and reveries, oft, sublimed by faith,
 Dim glimpses come, I know, of blessed states,
 And shadowings of power passed, which to the soul
 Seem inborn and accustomed, as a star

To light, when, late immersed it leaves the sun.

LUCIFER. Some thought perfection gainable still on earth

By their own mean life and efforts, as in heaven ;

And that with man it rests to reinstate

The Adamic Eden ; and, by converse pure

And holy life, redeem the sacred day

When nature's every work was miracle ;

When man, brute, angel, all in happy ease

Communed, and fruits throat-slaking made good, wise ;

As ere the immortal seraph-serpent, hid

By the sunset side of earth, stole forth and stung

Heaven's virgin star ; brake nature's innocent seal,

And left his lightning trail through all divine

Traditions. Some, strange speculatists thought he

And Other, were two lower powers, whom God

Had pitted in broad duel during time ;

But that the final victory would be heaven's ;

Not knowing evil's might. A countless train

Of misbeliefs like pure parhelia, these

Which come and vanish and return, new lifed,

With men unstable ; unhinderable of priest ;

Some grains of truth-gold starring here and there

The vast formations of the false. Meanwhile,

For meddling with such mysteries unmeant

Surely by heaven to be cleared up on earth,

Who have eyes trained to pierce the dark, outtaken,

These twin compellers of conformity,

Erst marked, condemned from time to time to hell,

Rack, massacre and fire, each hubble sect

That in full-blown emptiness rose, to show their own

Familiar, brotherly, charity, and so prove

The inspiration theirs they claim of God,

Who tells all, he is love. Those sects themselves,

Full of molecular motion, fought like mites

Which fill a water-drop, and day by day

Cursed or consumed each other. For the rest,

Who stood round the great altar muttering creeds,

And each had his dissenting heretics,

The third smote simply by the sword who dared

His chequered tale, not wholly truth nor lie,

Doubt, but suspended 'twixt, as utter void

Baseless. The fourth, more meek in general mood,

Willed ignorantly, both true and false, 'like scorned,

To tolerate. Now and then he closed his eyes

Wrathful, and slew promiscuously all round.

FESTUS. Much doubtless may be meant in that thou hast seen.

A sacred side there is to everything,

As given or else forbidden, as false or true,

According to the greater truth involved ;

One side is always bright, one always dark,

Leaflike and moonlike ; and each separate life

Is as a leaf which waits the quickening breath
 Of nature, our mysterious prophetess,
 To give it due place and order in the world.
 Heights too there are profound, and depths sublime
 Of thought, faith sole can deal with ; for as God's
 True name, if known, is uttered not in heaven
 Highest, nor on earth, so deeps unnameable are
 Which cannot be revealed of human life,
 And ought not if they could ; the elements
 Of the premortal manhood which inhered
 In the conception of creative mind,
 Since shown to few, and only dimly known.

LUCIFER. The spirit thou namest, then, showed thee not these things ?

FESTUS. Continue ; if thy vision more unveiled
 Thou wouldst impart, or me behoves to know.

LUCIFER. Modes next I marked of practice, rite and form,
 Strangest of human trusts : here, some would burn,
 There, others, drown, these maim, those clamm themselves
 Or fellows, all in proof of piety ;
 Some sacrificed their children, some their sires ;
 Some fruits, some flowers ; beasts and the young of beasts,
 In honest obstinate hope of earning heaven.
 Others heaped stone on stone, shrine piled on shrine,
 In emulous mimicry of the threefold heavens ;
 Silver inlaid with gold, gold decked with gem ;
 Others dug out the earth and worshipped fumes,
 Or paid respect to vapours which inhaled
 Bred holiest inspiration ; some in warm
 And reeking entrails read the signs of God,
 Or deemed they did, prophetic : others sun,
 Moon, stars, those fixed or wandering those,—adored,
 For spiritual good thence down-drawn ; earth-born fire
 Or sun-born ; rivers, mountains, seas, stones, herbs,
 Brute, insect, bird, fish ; earth and air and man ;
 All these were sworn by, prayed to, in the wild
 Sad faith that man's humanity, by them,
 Could gain some earnest of divinity.
 Some only ate of certain meats, or laid
 Under dread ban, all flesh and milk and wine ;
 Extolling green food and the sparkling spring,
 As though brutes only spiritually lived,
 And virtue were a vegetable thing.
 Others wore iron spikes around their waists,
 Burned fire in their bosoms ; with their bread
 Mixed dust and filth, ate grass, and naked lived ;
 Or crawled for leagues like serpents in the dust
 In sign of self abasement ; sign indeed
 Not lacked, where proof of fact much overabounds.
 Still, for I hasten now to close the tale
 Of those who thus believed, thus acted, still,

Whene'er I looked around me, hour by hour,
 The multitudes departed, yet increased.
 But one way came they ; countless ways they went
 Through age, birth, pestilence, vice, folly, and war.
 Disease, excess, want, famine, woe, sin, fate,
 The city of life twelve-gated ; gazing thus,
 Priest, altar, crowd, god ; all I seem to have seen,
 Vanish, and are no more ; till some near day
 When I would see again the earth, and lo !
 The vision all in orderly lapse, recurs
 From end to end, parts special only changed.

FESTUS. 'Tis strange, 'tis sad ; and if I now with man
 Conversed, I'd say that spirit and nature known
 To act contrarious, yet by God's grace, tend
 To ultimate harmony, seeming being opposed
 To being in seeming only. Rises earth
 Sunwards, not sun on earth ; yet let not man
 Deem creatural elevance into Heaven his right
 By force of reason, or end necessitate
 Of natural virtue ; for in moral spheres
 All action is of God, so willed, or wrought
 By his direct permission ; and when through life
 Ceaselessly sought, he, too, the world of soul,
 By act divinely voluntary, illumines,
 Sunwise, and quickens ! Even here, in the pure
 Black, unbeing void, where but for light of stars
 Lit by God's vital hand, the brightest star
 But blackest dust illumined from without ;
 Their central fires their death source sole ; not life
 Could be, nor mutual influence, until hailed
 From ours, or their own ambient ; so with man ;
 It is only through their sensuous atmospheres
 Spirits can behold each other, or that soul,
 Born in itself to realize all time,
 Dowered inly with all varieties of belief,
 As light all colourless all colours holds ;
 By search of Being's supremest spheres of thought
 Spiritual and moral, which man's nature rule,
 Can, by that art sublime, the scheme conceive
 Whereby the vital whole, from God outrayed
 His impress takes, and about his feet revolves
 On everlasting period ; and the world
 Spiritual, enlightened inly, orbitates
 By sweet attraction towards its source, His love,
 Propelled by upward gravity of the whole
 Towards his divine perfections ; he himself
 Conceiving, hearing, suffering, ending all,
 Affiliates finally, and inheavens. For thus
 To me appeared the sign the spirit now gave.

LUCIFER. But though not absolutely at large man knows
 His God, nor many have been in spirit rapt
 To Heaven ; yet hell to outdo in mutual hate,

And threats reciprocal of quenchless fire,
For speculative beliefs, earth's foulest crimes
Held easily expiable, seems gross misprize
Of heavenly justice and God's tolerance.

FESTUS.

Seems !

But 'tis not of man's conduct here I doubt
Nor seek to know his errors. I seek God.
All heavens exterior passed, the seats of soul
Self-purificative and probational, me
Heaven's threshold now ; even where yon radiant sun,
Of suns, sphere central and supreme of space,
The aspirant soul forewarns of holier life,
And aims more spiritual than mixed earth needs,
Immediate most to Deity ; me attracts
With irresistible force.

LUCIFER.

Thereto we tend,

FESTUS. And now my vision seemed passed end, to expand ;
Behold now heaven, the spirit exclaimed, and straight
One vast and universal heaven, I view ;
God's world-pervading, soul-sustaining smile
Towards good and holiness, for aye realized ;
And which all just ends harmonizing in spheres
Of mind and space, all hallows and makes glad.
There every thing hath life ; the elements
Made vital, glorified fourfold, and named
Love, wisdom, strength and beauty ; every hue
Which nature owns, from earth's original blush
To heaven's eternal azure, holy caused ;
There sentient cloudlets, delicate chariots oft
Of journeying souls, inspired by musical winds,
Winds fragrant as the breath of deity, shed
Grateful, their choicest effluence round the skies.
There, spirit exalting joys abide ; there flow
The fountains of eternal life and streams
Of perfect virtue for soul-baptism ; there,
Roll faith's abysmal mysteries, darkly clear ;
Though soundless, shoreless, luminous with life
Tempting to be explored. There grow the groves
Whose trees of golden bolls and pearly fruits
Breathe, as wind moved, the harmonious lauds of souls
And spiritual ; from illusory matter freed ;
Cities and fanes of diamonds crown the hills,
Bright with the sole companionship of heaven,
In this pre-earthly paradise, wherein
Who enter are by kindest angels clad
In garments wrought of rainbows ; and in robes
Woven as of sunset clouds ; while viny wreaths
Gemberries bearing, form their coronals,
Exuberant of all fruitage. Food they need not
Who live on life, and quaff eternal joy,
And rest in peace as in the down of doves.
There many pass all time, the hour of God,

In pure and still contentment. Others, yet,
 In ceaseless, boundless, progress, as from star
 To star, from bliss to bliss pass, until all,
 Like rays of light, light all attractive, all
 Delightful light, redeemed up to the sun,
 Return to God renewed. In one band, there
 Souls of all faiths, earth-holden, gracious live,
 In mutual forgiveness, blessing each
 The other ; what too in their several creeds
 Showed unproved, disproved, arrogant or unwise
 Or needless, each casts off ; what true, all keep,
 Uniting and amending ; for in all
 Was truth, if most in one. Thy soul it joys,
 She said, the spirit, to see this. Search thy heart ;
 Search, wouldst thou enter these abodes, and know
 There is a secret sign whereby the soul
 Feels certainty of safety and of power
 Imparted, public to the universe,
 By a single world unwist of, but to one
 Conscious of soul's divinity, a sign
 Infallible of the life immortal ; sign
 Stamped in the spirit as is the gleaming seal
 Thou sawest on brows of those imparadised
 The true trilateral monogram of God.
 I searched ; and in my vision deemed I found,
 But what imports it now ?

LUCIFER.

Aught said she more ?

FESTUS. What needs the spirit more speak ? No more I heard.
 She ceased ; the All-Create ; and gazing down, deep ;
 As into her own vast breast, o'er that abyss
 Her life-embracing arms she crossed in peace.
 She ceased ; and all was silence. Earth and heaven,
 Like solar seas unfathomably bright
 Rolled forth their inmost radiance in twin tides
 Immeasurable. Since time's first begotten day,
 Until the last born eve, when all shall end ;
 And life's great vein within the embosoming skies
 Be utterly dried up ; till night, as some
 Cloud-monster eats up star on star, shall whelm,
 In her intransitory darkness, all
 The children of the light ; till breath no more
 Shall freshen earth's lip nor breeze her breast, hath been
 Beheld such glory, nor shall be, nor may,
 Of nature serving God ; she, sibyl-like,
 Instinct with inspiration, and He her
 Endowing with all bliss unendingly.

LUCIFER. Approach we now the boundary of Heaven's sphere,
 The footstool of the Eternal.

FESTUS.

We draw nigh.

XXII.

One mediate being is, through all worlds, man ;
 One natural compass ; one sole moral scheme
 Pervades all worlds ; truth, reason, virtue, love
 And wisdom, sisterly hierarchy in God,
 Of divine attributes, the bounds embrace
 Of infinite life ; and, as in spirit, one
 Space-travelling, views suns other than our own,
 Of mightier light ; see stars constellate take
 New shapes ; and, recombined in alien forms,
 Beam grandlier now, now dimlier ; but the same
 Their astral elements ; so, the more is seen
 Of soul-life universal, mind, the more
 Rejoicing in the original bright of things,
 The luminous plan adaptable to all change,
 Knows it shall recognize in after worlds,
 How variously see'er thought 'guise its form,
 The base of all, the Immutable. Here, too, deems
 Eccentric science, systems, conglobate,
 May mass them finally ; sun crushed on sun ;
 The ultimate form of all phenomenal life,
 Inapposite not such judgment to our strain.

THE CENTRAL SUN ; FESTUS ; LUCIFER ; ANGEL OF EARTH ; *who continues, and concludes, the story of THE ANGEL-WORLD. FESTUS and LUCIFER approaching.*

FESTUS. Space-centering sun ; of science new conceived,
 But eldest of all worlds ; parental mass,
 Midmost of all repose ; vast counterpoise
 Of Being's total movement ; point, all act
 Tends to ; outcome of all accomplished Time's
 Countless activities ; here extinguished ; base
 E'er broadening of the o'erthrown whole ; sad tomb
 Of all intent ; and cope-stone of all deed.
 Here Science sums her speculative career ;
 Who in the immense prediction of this orb
 Unseen, and hearted in all boundlessness ;
 Knowing the great necessity in the close
 Of things ; foretold this mean 'tween all and nought,
 Type of the infinite oneness whence were formed
 All world-diversities, once ; and now recast
 In composite unity, of life's end divine.
 Seat of original silence and the crown
 Of final harmonies, whereto all these
 Thy nursling worlds, by Being's broadest law
 Material gravitate ; thyself not all
 To him irresoluble, whose cogent word
 From spatial aethers, and all void, bade Be.

LUCIFER. Go where we will, 'tis very sad, we meet
 With ruins, as a rule. These world-wrecks, see
 Once, doubtless, floating gallantly enough.

FESTUS. But one word, and the whole unsubstanced show
 Of things once made shall cease and disappear.
 The ruins even shall perish.

LUCIFER.

Good. But now
Behold earth's Angel ; more than hoped for this.

FESTUS. Angel benign ; to meet thee, sums the joys,
To greet thee, heals the pains, of many a year.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Once named between us, never lost I sight
Of this our possible meeting-place, and here,
If each pause on our course, 'tis upward, still,
And nearer, so, to God. The expanding soul
Vast world-life here enjoys, and to its field
Scaled meetly of free act and duty, bends
Its whole force to ends finest ; and so earns
Rewards condign of God, howbeit unsought.
Here all the tribes of universal man
Human, angelic, mingle ; here convene ;
Are hence distribute, and example all.
These to their natal orb true ; those to spheres
Various, as Heaven ordains, need, choice, demands.

FESTUS. These, not unlike to men in guise and air
But of an ampler presence and more bright
Within, as though an inward star, the heart
Elanced its penetrable light through all,
And on all round ; not otherwise than a soul
Met sometime on the earth, egregious, pure
In honour, radiant minded, not than men
Less cognisant of science, lore mundane,
Or truth divine ; but simpler, and with more
Constant essay to attain life's loftier aims ;
Reached rarely, hardly, even here, with proof
Trebled of single-hearted faith. All-where,
Nature like selfish as on earth, like check
In good things, like negation of things ill,
Like training towards things better needs, as all
Who would their soul's perfection.

LUCIFER.

All-where?

ANGEL OF EARTH.

Yes,

Here, then, as elsewhere, spirit is tempted, tried,
Fails, too, in men and angels, one in fount,
In end, one ; purifies its mediate path
Back to its life's source first, last and best
Of Being ; infinite ; and so, distinct,
By boundless variance, from all soul create
Man, mean of all things, bodily, spiritual, shaped
Diversely ; one substantially in frame,
In faculties, elsewhere, and in mental powers,
Finite and free essentially ; of good
Ill, right and wrong, true, false, expertly wise,
Responsible ; with Divinity and the world
One mighty triad. To each separate sphere,
Its thought, its lore, its proof of God, by law
Based on the immutable One's perfections ; based
On rational science, general in all orbs,
Deductive of one common moral rule ;

So, franchised by its maker ; through all worlds.
 By angel dominated, or man, free choice
 And just obedience or revolt 'gainst law,
 Pertains as here ; for liberty, divine
 Prerogative of will, man shares with Heaven ;
 To know this, is to know the world no more
 A mystery, or false maze which baffles mind,
 But progress constant, self-perfective life.
 And this for man's whole race, not only such
 As earth breeds of red-hearted souls, but lives,
 Mid spaces passed all angels' ken, that range
 Life's limits boundless.

FESTUS. Gladly I thy words
 Grave on my heart.

ANGEL OF EARTH. But now, since retrospect
 More fruitful oft of wisdom proves than act
 Scarce conscious ; and reflection's side-ray cast
 Shows clearer where we stand than the foot tells ;
 So, by thought, musing o'er the passed, not less
 Than plans for time to come, the soul grows wise.

FESTUS. Rest me then here, and if the tale of worlds
 And acts transcending earth's, lead not too far
 From present purposes, do thou resume,
 Compassionate spirit, the story of the star
 Whose act revoltant, earlier told, thou saidst
 To thrones and virtues, caused celestial tears,
 Till then to them unknown ; to me mayhap
 By right more 'customed, apt enough.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Not once
 Forgetful of our purpose the sad theme
 Suits me not ill, who look with vesper choirs
 To chant life's dirge.

LUCIFER. I steel me to endure.
 These lachrymatory ducts, perchance, are dry,
 Doubtless adust ; or from excess or lack
 Of ocular lymph ; but hold thou to thy text,
 Not I will interrupt.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Those tears thou hast named,
 Complaisant fiend ! I not invoke, nor need ;
 My mission not of punishment ; yet well
 The tale to be recounted may thee shake
 With dread, anticipative of doom. And thou,
 As some proud pine uneasily from his crag,
 Scanning the horizon, eyes a long low cloud,
 Premonitory of thunder and the shock
 Of griding lightning through his vanward limb,
 Hadst best prepare for that may come ; and now
 Those tears recorded shed in saddest tone,
 Resumed the Heavenly stranger his discourse.
 'Ne'er to be found,' I said ; but who can find
 A limit to God's mercy ? In like estate,
 They never may, nor shall be ; still, for all

Is hope ; the inalienable resource of soul.
But let the time-glass of their sins run down,
Whose recollection whelms me still with woe.
Not many darkening days had passed away,
Before the mighty mysteries stood revealed ;
And strangest vanishings one by one of those
Once loved and honoured most, made sadly clear
Beneath the shade delicious of a wood,
In whose Elysian glades those strangers fixed
At first their dwelling, and therein prepared
Their secret rites and sacred mysteries,
Skirting the gold sands of the sapphire sea
Were those deceived assembled ; so deceived
The day they weened was longer, brighter, now ;
And each the other hailed as happier then,
Than in the ages passed. Forth flashed the song,
Upwards, like earth-born lightning, and the dance,
Of crystalline symmetry, skimmed around the shore
In vortices of light ; the world-queen there
Now mingling with the mirthful throng ; now sole,
Seeking in thought repose. Oh this, they cried,
Is joy, the bliss of liberty. At once,
That senseless dream to dissipate, lo ! there rushed,
Out of a cave with toppling crags o'erhung,
A hugeous monster, such as never night
With murderer's mind engendered, when his heart
Lay panting underneath the conscience pang
Like fawn beneath a wolf's jaw. Dragonlike
In lengthening volumes stretched his further part,
Incalculably curled, but in the front,
On one wide neck a hundred heads he reared,
Which spake with every mouth a hundred tongues,
Through teeth of serried daggers, black with blood.
The breath he drew in day, he breathed out night.
Descending to the sea to drink, though close
By his cave a cool bright river ran, 'twas thirst
The monster showed he better loved than aught
More pure, that thirst could quench. The abhorrent sea
Shrank backwards tide by tide ; but he pursued
Triumphing in its fascinating fear
Into the very midst ; then gorged, returned
Soul-sodden to the shore ; where prone he lay
Before his horrid hold ; with stormy joy,
Gnashing his steely teeth, and with his tail,
Now close contorted, and now far out launched,
Sweeping the shiny slime of the wide sea-sands.
Awe stricken stood the duped allies, fear-grouped,
Of the delusive strangers. Ceased, at once,
The dance's moving labyrinth ; shouts of joy ;
And whispered gratulation. First to speak
Was one, the last who lapsed from pure estate,
Be this the god you serve ? the god ye swear

We too should this day, see? Our god, said they.
And are we bound to adore him, who have passed
Through your mysterious rites, and on us ta'en
His worship, by the oath of fire? Ye are bound,
In tones of hate replied the spirit chief,
By whom that wise one told of first was lost,
There standing as the hierophant of hell;
Behold ye are before him; bow the knee.
Him then I bow not to, nor worship, said
The recusant convert; but recant, abjure
Now and for ever. Ne'er would I have dreamed
To exchange the one true for a hundred false;
Death, be my witness. Be his witness, death;
All cried aloud; and knee'd their idol fiend.
And the vast monster smiled; on every head
(Each head a half-face shewed of one same god;
A half-face of a century more of such,
Demoniac; as thine earth itself once served;)
A hot and lurid smile, like the red light,
Which hovereth o'er the earth-quake yet unborn,
Though quickening. Woe! When all, such answer made,
Were, with remorse smit, penitent, and aside
Turned them to go, the hierophant exclaimed,
Give to the mighty one his victim due;
The angel youth then who had just recalled
His oath accursed, the fell destroyers seized
And cast before their false, foul god, which cried,
No more of these ignoble victims; hence,
Bring me the royal sisterling, and I ask
None else ere I depart. These fearful words
Heard, consternation and lament the minds
Filled of all present, and most base resolve
The hearts of some, like molten lead. And now,
Their cruel purpose when the sister queen
Saw, to that living idol, fierce and foul,
She kneeled; and touched with natural sorrow, him
Besought the child to spare. Take what, she said,
Take all thou wilt, but leave alone this one,
My sweet and sacred sister. She with me
Once in the happy passed, and innocent, lived,
A pure perpetual blessing; from her hand
Came boundless bounties; not a word she spake
But seemed a benediction; her bright heart
With lovelight glowed, for ever at the full.
In days of old, o'er all the orb she ranged,
And wheresoe'er she ranged, reigned. All that felt
The spell of her resplendent presence, joyed
In her ecstatic advent, as the waves
Leap into light to meet the increscent moon.
But now, because of deeds thou know'st too well,
Deeds, it were better, may be had not been,
Immured, she lives the life of charity,

In the still precincts of her holy home,
With many a pious handmaiden around,
In starry palace templed, till the hour
Of once predestined nuptials, as she deems,
If sorrow have not wrecked her reason, come.
I, her rebukes of love have oft-times borne,
Scornful, and heaped on her indignities,
Things, peradventure, for repentance meet,
She hath thrice forgiven ; but spare her life, we pray ;
And I for all speak thou wouldst count thine own ;
So good ; to all so aidful ; so beloved.
Thou speakest as the she-fool only can,
Retorted then the angry terror. Rise.
The reasons thou dost urge for life are those
I hate her for, to death. Go ; thou thyself
Shalt bind her to yon rock, or both I slay.
Ceased then his tongue its frightful thunder clang.
Meanwhile those basest few who thought to win
The tyrant monster's favour, and preserve
Themselves from fatal end, death-threatened now,
Sought out the sorrowing maiden, and disguised
In borrowed robes of cheerful thanksgiving,
Entered the heavenly sanctuary wherein,
At the high altar ministering she stood,
Angelic priestess rapt in rites divine ;
Presaging sorrows soon to be fulfilled ;
Predicting woes accomplished while foretold.
These, in mock worship mingling with the rest
Yea, even in mine own presence ; for in her,
Midst all these woes did I sole solace find,
Her, sudden seized, and bound ; and hurrying off
To a lone sea-crag, circled by the sea,
There, for the monster's evening victim, left.
Then vowed I to deliver her from her foes,
And for the rescue armed. The lightning steed,
On air which pastures, the pre-ultimate sign
Of the divine destruction of all worlds ;
The sparkles of whose hoofs in falling stars,
Struck from the adamantine course of space,
Stream o'er the skies, in swift and solemn joy
Came trembling at my call. A lance of light,
A sunbeam tempered in eternal fire,
I in mine hand assumed, and forth we fared.
Wide o'er the waters rose a wail of woe,
With a crowd's fierce shout of exultation twined ;
For, chained to a dark rock, rough and high, the sea
Was loathly yielding back to land, there stood,
Arrayed in Paradisal purity
Alone, that meek and innocent angel maid ;
The monster wading greedily through the waves,
Her to devour ; the angels, some aghast,
Exulting some ; her sister as half dead,

Fell fainting from her seat ; the only light
Of falling stars, with blinks of lightning mixed,
Lamping the red horizon fitfully.
Midway 'tween rock and sea, we met ; and though
The creature bellowing would have fled, nor more
Light's eye with mock divinity defiled ;
Yet was I there to slay as well as save.
The lance of light I couched ; and straight my steed
Who knew, instinctive, all his dread devoir ;
Drove on, like an inevitable storm,
Through the whole monstrous mass, till in the heart,
Quivering it stood, triumphant. Down then dropped
The soulless corpse. The beauteous captive's bonds
I, instant, burst ; and wrapped her sacred limbs
In the like robes I wore, of golden web
And azure wove ; for forth I sped at first,
Of conquest confident, mine armour dight
With trophies rich, beseeeming such event.
And on the rock where long she swooning lay,
Though conscious she was saved from direst death,
I placed her, perfect in pure loveliness,
And in that garb of glory. Then there came
A voice, as of a star-cloud in the sky,
Approving all I had done, and blessing. Formed
I saw, too, 'neath the cloud a rainbow bright,
From whose arch, falling as in circular gust.
And minishing spires, this wingèd thing of light,
Sign augural of divine and holy peace,
God-missioned, hovered round me for a time,
Then nestled in my bosom, as ye see.
But not so from the orb, where still remained
Those recreant spirits who with loud lament
Wept their extinguished god ; him to revive
Striving with all their strength. In vain they strove.
Now, lest the venomous vapours of his corpse
Might the whole sphere impest, it was decreed,
By crown alike and lieges, all alarmed,
To offer to the soul of the dead beast,
His body as a solemn holocaust,
Each of the other worthiest. This achieved,
With a vast mass of pompous rites, the Queen,
In sordid weeds of false humility,
And all her proudest subjects, head declined,
In mournful train, upon a mighty mound
Upreamed by the seaside, the heapy corse
Of the terrific slain laid out ; and barked
In their last complot, lo ! another seized
Their souls, instinct with hate more murderous still ;
Mine own destruction. Me, where I remained
Protecting her I honoured, they approached,
Beseeching I would witness the last rites
And public incremation of the dead,

All that he gladdeneth over, as his own ;
Nor aught made more than he can deal with ; turn
Towards its own profit, and his joy ; though oft,
In travail of its proper end, made mind
Dole measureless endures, constrained to learn
The rule, that in made mind, the divine is born
Of bitterness ; and where sacrifice is not,
Is never fire ; the fire which sanctifies.
One thought now lightened in my mind ; one hope
My spirit possessed ; one vast desire my soul.
I claimed to suffer for her, in her stead,
So she might be absolved. But Heaven refused
The substitute injustice. Think, said God,
Have I not said for ages, every soul
Should its own burden bear, and every son
Of man, his own feet from the snare release
He had himself entangled in ? Think not,
One soul, however high can other free
From sin or sin's due doom. Just Heaven forbids
All misconceived presentment of the good
For ill, and innocence for guilt ; nor needs ;
He who is more, and higher, than all laws
He hath made, as merciful as just, can aught
He will, of leviathan fine, remit,
The death-mulct, therefore of offenceful soul,
On its own penitence forgiven ; and each
Its arbitrary act must bide. No more
Misconstrue equity divine, but bid
The penitent sinner trust in God, and live.
But still no sign of soul repentant showed ;
And judgment took her unobstructed way.
More solid grew the darkness, night by night ;
The sacred groves were fired, and every tree,
Charred into naked blackness ; day by day,
City and temple, hallowed once, were razed,
And their foundations rooted up, to find
Some light to see to live by, or invent
Haply ; in vain. The soil they stood on, self
Consumed, gave grisly ashes at the last,
Only ; unjuiced, unvital. Day and night,
Rang with the cries of myriad woes, the skies,
Till the stars shuddered ; and the orb I watched
The awakening of the Angel Maid in, shook.
Close by her feet, insculptured, on the couch
Her light form, lightlier than a folded flower
Impressed, a child cherubic showed, which held
An hour-glass in his hand. Ten times it turned,
Upwards and downwards ; at the twelfth it fell ;
And falling, broke ; and as it fell, she rose ;
Rose, like a lily bending o'er its stem,
Gently until she stood. And, hark, she cried,
Beloved, hear'st thou not that wail of woe ?

I know it, whence it comes. Oh let us hence
 Hasten, and Heaven beseech to save ; to save.
 Then stirred the dove divine imbosomed here.
 And I obeyed its impulse, as of God,
 From whom it came ; and calling to my side
 A cloudlet like a silver swan that sailed
 The deeps of air, we clasped its snowy down,
 And swiftly winged our way ; till, drawing near
 Again, that dark apostate orb, our tears,
 But most my loved one's, fell like raindrops down.
 Thus moved, I said, unto the air, be fire ;
 And to the waters, be ye flames ; (but flames
 Celestial, purifying ; not gross like those
 I have told of, all destroying, which far off
 Showed, on the horizon, the unbroken ring
 Of round beleaguering fire, that, swift as thought
 The angelic nations all in one doomed flock
 Relentless, closed), I said, and straight, in sooth
 It was so ; for it seemed but meet to purge
 The sanctuary in this wise, so defiled.
 From side to side, from end to end, it burned ;
 From pole to pole it blazed, from sea to sea ;
 All cleansing it consumed ; till in the heart
 Of that bright city, central to the sphere,
 Now shining ruins only, o'er the height
 Of one immovable mountain monument,
 (Forked like a double pyramid which sole
 Survived the splendid wreck) we stood on ; lo !
 Struck suddenly as from vertical space, what seemed
 To fear's rash eye once more Heaven's fiery glaive
 All 'stonying, burned ; some dreading it, if waved
 By the same hand as first, would cleave in twain
 Their self accursèd sphere, and hurl its dust,
 With them, for ever into the deathly void.
 Near and more near on waves of light it rode
 Swiftly triumphant, and with blinding beam ;
 Till o'er the orb's full centre, all its fires
 Conflagrant, mutually pernicious, quelled,
 As in presence of a mightier power, at last,
 By slow descent alighting, still it stood ;
 Stood upright ; not, as deemed, a flaming brand,
 But sceptral olive staff ; the original rod
 Our pilgrim angel's copied ; this with light
 Liquid and life's sapped ; distilling peace
 On such as, Heaven's true seed, light love ; there stands ;
 Symbol of peace and power supreme ; which all
 Who seek God's sceptral righteousness, Heaven's scale
 And measure of immortal bliss, may touch,
 And touching live. Who toucheth magnetwise
 That luminous pale, no longer gropes in dark
 Of his own Being, but all things sees through ;
 And in, and to himself authentic light,

All that he gladdeneth over, as his own ;
Nor aught made more than he can deal with ; turn
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 And measure of immortal bliss, may touch,
 And touching live. Who toucheth magnetwise
 That luminous pale, no longer gropes in dark
 Of his own Being, but all things sees through ;
 And in, and to himself authentic light,

To all gives light. Alas for creature will !
If here some seek, more there the truth eschew.
Darkness and light still stand at war, as good
And ill, which lose and win in turn, while stars,
Vivific globelets roll them through the veins
Galactic of the heavens ; so long as lasts
Creation ; nor our prescient Lord the weight
Casts in life's scale of his all-conquering word,
And good, for good, prevails. But now, I said,
Go thou poor selfless soul ; this golden key
True, triple, take which life, death, life divine,
Eternal emblems ; master-key of all
Time's mysteries in all worlds ; which nought may let ;
Which Heaven's own gates unlocks of solid light,
The portals of the palace of that Sun
No eye create shall else behold ; which, said,
I from my breast the sacred symbol drew,
And in her pure palm placed. This, said I, take
And ope the prison our exile moans in, nigh
To death. Restore to life's sweet light, strike off
The manacles from her hands, and from her feet
Loosen the insultant fetters. In her wounds
Pour thou the oil of peace, and wash with streams
Of living waters. Clothe her with thyself
As thou art clothed. O cheer her heart with hope
And inspiration of thy faith, and say
I sent thee to redeem her. Tell her, still
My love hath never altered ; not in grief,
In passion not, not in disgrace, nor guilt ;
Howe'er inconstant her heart, or opposed,
Her love I with an everlasting love ;
The One am I unchanging ; what beside
Thou wilt ; for thou canst only utter truth.
Go ; and may He who over-orders all
Speed thee upon thy quest. She, wordless, went,
But looked her thanks ; which seemed to promise full
Discharge of precept ; on a wished-for wind
Wafting herself away. I, who, while all
This dark defection reigned in Angel world,
Had warned in vain 'gainst error, seeing now,
Heaven's own eternal standard planted there,
Perpetual in its mild appeal to all,
Even souls sin smirched, for life and choice renewed,
Predestinately triumphant ; and once more,
By this dear monitor, this God-gift, moved
That sphere to quit ; first in myself resolved
Time's mighty stream to pass, which bounds the realms
Of sense and soul, and either separates
From Heaven's eternal spirit land, that I
Might to the sire of all present for all
My heart's entreaties ; and the prayerful love
Of that bright maid, for her sister, penitent now,

The Eternal's great forgiveness might receive
And sin o'erlapping pardon. On this high
And arduousest emprise, behold me bound ;
Yet ere I left my cloudlet ear, whence late
I marked that world-wreck, once again I gazed
Thitherward, and beheld before the gates
Of a half-buried palace, black as death,
Its marble portals, locked in blessed embrace,
The well-belovèd twain. A voice then spake,
The voice of one joy-hearted, soft and clear
As bells at early morn, on that blessed day
Named in the breast-laws of each starry orb,
Wherein eternity entwines with time
Its golden strands, and weds the world to Heaven ;
Arise, stand forth, belovèd sister, rise ;
How blessed am I to serve thee, to release.
The faintest sigh of penitence faith's fine ear
Hears through a dungeon's walls ; and this we heard ;
Heaven heard it, and rejoiced. And longer, now,
Nor doubt, nor wait. Behold thy handmaid, me.
Gifts bring I for thee ; gifts of countless cost ;
Of priceless worth. Thy lover Lord commands
Array thee for the bridals. Lo, the new
And shining robes by heavenly fingers wrought
Fit for her form divine whose happy love
Is hallowed in the eternal rites of Heaven.
So shall we dwell together here in bliss,
Till he shall come who ever comes to all
His promise sanctifies. Use well the hour
Which yet remains, in all obedience clear ;
And deck thyself in weeds of righteousness,
With jewels of good deeds adorned, and clad
In radiant raiment redolent of praise.
For infinite is every gift of His
Divine bestowing ; and Salvation's cup,
As Nature's, He to overflowing fills.
With joy I heard, I saw. Nor longer then
Awaited, but where most the starlands crowd
The potent North, my way sped, space on space
Leaving in turn behind ; passing unharmed
Upon the verge of Being, where the path
Narrows to almost nothing ; the monsters foul,
Grave-dust, and death-night, things ye know not of,
Yet fatal beasts to all who, me before,
That way had urged. But God hath favoured me.
And nigh thereto, the Golgotha of worlds,
Time's charnel house, where, skull-like, giant orbs
Extinct of life, with rotting, sickly light
Defiled the purview, and advance delayed ;
Yet shrinking nought, though shuddering, passed I on,
Through all uncleanness clean, all foulness, pure.
Fasting, athirst and faint with travail, still

My purposed way I have held, till, bright afar,
The kindly radiance of this angel world
Beaconed me hither, and I came. Ye now,
Thanks for your welcome, holy and hospitable,
Behold me journeying to the City of God,
There to prefer my prayers, and plead for those
Whom still I love, though drawn aside to trust
The natural strength allotted them, and not,
With first and just reliance, as befits
All soul created, God ; who thus to all
By failure even of angels, when He wills,
The perfect path points out ; and to all spirit,
Sin's sequence, and the mean to escape from sin,
Asserting, shows His righteousness and grace.
Let whoso feels in holy will inspired
Me to accompany, speak, to that bright throne
Where God our Father in all glory sits,
The world in holy audience at His feet ;
And there, with me, while giving praise for all
His word hath made and saved, for those not yet
Redeemed, pray ceaselessly. Uprist, as 'twere
A living constellation, suddenly,
Seven of those angels, I one, pressed around,
By impulse each, and like instinctive, urged,
Eager for friendly escort ; when the chief
Cherub who welcomed first that pilgrim bright,
Thus said ; Another holy day, made blessed
By our dear guest ; how different he from those
Deceptive friends he tells of ; hath now slid
Into the passive, strength recruiting, night ;
Rest also ye. Such is mine own intent,
Replied the eloquent guest ; and less for that
These life-tried limbs have gone through, than their sakes,
Who know not half the flight they meditate.
Then, worship before rest ; the changeless wont
Of all, ere act, refreshment, or repose.
Last, on their happy couches, odorous all
Of flowery incense, lay the angels down,
Shading their faces with the plummy gold
Of their space-searching pinions ; sacred sleep
Stealing the starry wonders of their eyes,
And with divinest visions hallowing all.
Morn, like a maiden o'er her pearls, a gift
Unhoped, mysteriously conveyed by night,
Glanced o'er the manna dew, as though the ground
Were sown with starseed ; and the angels rose,
Each from his hallowed couch, and, duly made,
The soul's oblation Godwards, took their leave,
For a brief space, of their beloved compeers ;
With many an ardent longing for the way,
As yet untried, 'neath such sweet leadership.
Exchanged, at length, the last embrace, last look,

High upward, the bright bevy, like to light
Out of the crownèd North, shot ; on and on,
Through firmamental fields of farthest space,
Till, at the brink of a broad river arrived,
Swift as a cataract, but unbroken, still,
And level as is the mean line of the sea,
Which seemingly pervaded heaven, they halt.
Thick with chaotic matter and unformed,
Like the volcanic blood unseen which bounds,
In veins of lightning, through earth's cavernous heart ;
With ruined orbs, like broken ice lumps, rolled
Melting and crumbling, from the ocean deeps
Of passed eternity, dense, it rushed, to meet
The infinite to come ; and while its depths
Were darkness self, yet every surface wave
Which curled out of the mass, seemed light alive,
Though but an instant. On an eminent height,
Which overpeered the stream, the angels sate.
Then said our Angel leader to the rest,
"What see ye past the river?" And they said,
"We nothing see beyond. Athwart this stream,
If stream it be, and not a shoreless main,
Is more than we can ken." "But I," returned
The questioner, "see beyond, the clear bright land
Of heavenly immortality ; mine own
By birthright, earned, and given ; and thither, we,
Descending to the shore," he stooped, and dipped
Into the stream his hand ; which filling full,
He tasted, and thus spake : "Ye waters, once
Of death, but now of life percipient, take
Back the libation I of ye have made,
And be ye changed for ever." Uttering this,
He cast the dark remainder in the flood,
Which was, of being, but that instant changed
Into the tide of conscious life, with light
Celestial, flashing to its soundless deeps.
Grasping the branch then of an olive tree,
Which bowered with verdant gold the peaceful shore,
He therewith sprinkled, one by one, the band
Who him accompanied ; with these pure rites
Making them free, initiate into heaven,
And death the lesser mysteries of life.
Joy, self-evolving now each heart lit up
With solemn marvel at these gladsome deeds ;
And round him all stood linked in one embrace.
"Behold," he said ; "for fit it is that now
We keep our course ;" and just below, there lay,
Moored but a little distance from the side,
A crescent boat, translucent as a star,
We all embarked in, paled with godly dread ;
For one, I said, 'mong that self-chosen seven,
Who had, in duteous care, succeeded once,

Long since the primal heptarchs expiant now
Of their false claims to Divinity, sin superb,
Was I ; my fellow angels, of all grades ;
One only in their holy fear of God.
If lightning were the gross corporeal frame
Of some seraphic essence, whose bright thoughts
As far surpassed, in keen rapidity,
The lagging action of his limbs, as mind
Man's clay ; so, too, with like excess in speed,
O'er animated thought of lightning, flew
That moon horned vessel o'er life's upmost deeps.
Passed memory's golden isles, where things are not,
And only names exist, cloud counterparts,
Around whose reefs the bright seductive sea
Smiles wreckful, and sincerest smoothness feigns.
We went, we knew not how. It was as though
Finite with infinite mingling, rapture wrought
Of o'er abundant reason. At the last
Heaven's azure shores we made, and leaped on land.
Scarce had we touched that land all life, when lo !
From every footfall, like soft waves of light,
A murmurous music sprang, as if its own
Its bosom welcomed, with serenest joy
Rejoicing inwardly. The sacred soil,
To these premundane harmonies vibrating,
The same which faith hears in the still of time,
Our chief saluted ; kneeling, likewise we.
Then he, embracing all, each soul in turn,
Said, build we now a column here of light,
That all upon the further side may know
We have in safety crossed the flood, and see
What perils, 'mid stream, to avoid. Himself
Placed the foundation stone ; and one by one,
Masses of dazzling adamant, which starred
The shining shore, like flowers that fringe the banks
Of woodland brook, we piled up altar-wise,
At his command. On every stone was graved,
In gleamy dark, some name of God ; each name,
A separate title symbolizing truth.
A sheaf of lightnings on the head he placed,
Which with the skies intense communion held,
And burned in correspondence : all thus crowned
With heartiest love, soul beaconing, warning soul.
Our journey called us on : and pleased we trode
That land of solid concord ; yet not long
The lower line of progress kept. Aloft
Once more we stretched the light related wing,
High in the face of Heaven's eternal towers,
Immeasurably, as seemed at first, remote ;
And of sight-quelling brilliance, more almost
Than enough to quench our lesser beam. But this,
As we approached them, strengthened and enlarged,

In heart and effluence. Whilst we happy seven
 Were marvelling at such change, enrapt in thought,
 Lost in the labyrinth of a boundless love,
 Self-humbled by the glory upon us poured,
 Heaven was, we felt, close to us ; and we had reached
 The basement of that shining city's walls,
 Celestial, which enclosed the essential world,
 Or might, expansible ; and standing by
 Prayer's glowing gate, about to enter, missed
 Our stranger friend, our angel leader. Lost
 In holy wonder, greater now, each turned
 To other, yet none spake. But straight on high,
 A voice spake for us, saying, Enter ye ;
 For I am he who led ye hither ; still
 Lead ye ; your guest ; your guide. Then rushed on all,
 Like eagle swallowing up its streamy way,
 The whole mysterious truth. And we obeyed
 The word magnetic ; the divine constraint.
 We entered. All was silent. One sole voice
 The extatic stillness brake, at last ; and toned
 With Heaven's serene eternity, streamed up
 Towards the Ineffable One ; nor harp, nor hymn
 Ear caught, nor breath beside ; nor thought, nor hope
 Of all creation, but therein was bound.
 Father, he said, in union with all souls
 Thou hast into being breathed, for all I pray ;
 I, son of thine humanity, through the worlds
 Now, wandering ; now, if proximate to thy throne,
 Never to thee ; to thee nought made is near,
 Nor can be ; thou thyself being nigh to all.
 For us thy creatures thus imperfect, yet
 So perfect made, that tempted by the sense
 Of their own excellence, trusting in themselves,
 More than in thee, presumptuously, and apt
 Therefore to fall ; for those now fallen we pray,
 Thy mercy, Lord ! Let not the imperfect, tried
 By thy perfection ; nor the fallible, weighed
 Against omniscience, prove such failure fixed
 For creatures' total ruin ; nor just pain,
 For ever operative, wear out at last
 Power limited of endurance ; for the strength
 Of all create, would rend beneath the strain
 Like a bow o'erstrung, contending, Lord ! 'gainst thee.
 Rather let all corrected, chastened, fined
 By thy just law, their reason self-convict
 Constraining them, recoveringly partake
 Truth's sacred light ; that so the soul relumed
 And strengthened 'gainst the darkness self-invoked,
 Of spirits or false, or faultily unforeseeing,
 Which shrouds their world, its lover Lord may seek ;
 That Heaven's pure light the darkness of that world
 May clarify ; that soul, by thy pure spirit

Impregned, bring forth divine felicitousness ;
 And, passed death's bitter flood, the just may see
 Life's pure regeneration come, in fine,
 To all soul, saved and sanctified to thee.
 He ceased ; and issuant from the eternal throne,
 Came, like a cloud of light, the bright response,
 The Godhead in expression ; love through law
 Uttering, more broad than light, thus published ; son !
 Be ever answered, soon as made, thy prayers.
 Out of that love which stablished first the stars,
 And with pure Nature's holy Spirit conjoined,
 Brought forth divine humanity, through all spheres,
 Free as a God to choose in error's spite,
 In sin's, in ill's, in imperfection's, lo !
 I make the world mine own, and take again,
 For its own sake rehallowed, and in me
 Redeemed, all spirit life ; this to my will,
 Free, fateful, due, from first ; redemption, not
 Than all creation less embodying, love,
 Shall see no bound, and so be satisfied
 With everlasting ingrowth. Finite mind
 Can err no more than boundedness involves,
 And the Infinite concedes. World after world,
 The illuminated missal of the skies,
 Which leaf by leaf thou turn'st, shall close ; the spheres
 Of shining sadness, man ubiquitous owns
 Thou once, and that but late thou pray'dst for, erst
 Apostate, now to bliss restored and grace,
 Shall, as thou wouldst, retrack the paths of life.
 And as in this orb, now, grace divine hath blessed,
 They who love God, see truly ; so, removed
 For a space, the angels reprobate which sought
 To wreck the innocence of all ; even now
 Conscious of wrong, and so redeemable
 By self-exactive discipline of years,
 Full many, and remorseful, yet to be,
 Shall see in the end how reason, of process pure
 And irresistible, shows their former act
 Both sin, and sin to be abjured and mourned.
 Which done, and mercy, chief of acts divine
 In their conception, manifested to them,
 Behold the world I gave thee, sinless first,
 Then recreant, last, to bliss restored and grace,
 Made happier and more amiable than first,
 The earnest of the harvest of the skies,
 Behold it at thy feet. The creature lures,
 Snares, both, of mystery and idolatry,
 Shall yet, transformed, rejoice before all life,
 As simple worship, perfect truth, pure faith.
 Law is the first of things, and form is law.
 As light create is night destroyed, so changed
 Shall every sensible organ be to force

Spiritual and form ; all power to faculty
 Divine ; each fault a pure perfection made.
 God said ; responsive silence caught the words,
 And hid them in her breast, as night the stars.
 Glowing and sparkling in the life-rayed sun
 Of the celestial firmament, glided up
 On pinions wide of playful lightnings poised
 That sphere Elysian ; by the angels eyed
 (As stars in nightly council watch the earth.)
 Who gladdening saw, three paces from the light,
 Midst of that pure and renovated orb
 Covering with evening cope a wearied head,
 Beside the gardened bank of a bright stream,
 A fair and lofty lady, clad in robes
 Of sea-green hue, girdled with golden zone
 All variously begemmed ; and round her brow,
 Encrowned with peaks of quivering light, a veil
 Of heavenly azure : In this hand a tower,
 In that, a tree. Sate at her feet a maid,
 Pale perfect and serene. 'Tween both there passed,
 With many a reassuring word of love,
 A mutual smile of sympathy and trust,
 As though their lot were linked ; yet knew they scarce
 How, nor the invisible witness of the Heavens.
 These, while each viewed intently, as though felt
 Close by, the waft of angel's wing, at last
 The younger whispering spake ; Sweet sister mine,
 Sleep thou, and me let wait his coming sole.
 Me he expects to watch ; but would not thou.
 Thereon, reluctant but persuasible still,
 That elder Excellence, laid her down, below
 A rock, in woods, and scented blooms embowered,
 The river flowed by ; watch ; her latest word ;
 Watch, an' thou wilt ; in sooth, he will not come.
 Or not to me, who wrought him so much bale.
 And eve set in : still watched the maiden meek,
 And at midnight she prayed. Be thine, O God,
 The spirit which commands and smiles ; which bids
 And blesses ; promises and fulfils ; be ours
 The soul which serves and suffers ; thine the stars
 Tabled upon thy bosom like the stones
 Oracular of light, on the priest's breast ;
 Thine the minutest mote the moonbeams show.
 Come true thy veriest word, and all are blessed.
 Be but thine infinite intents fulfilled,
 And what shall foil the covenanted oath
 The spiritual earth is based on, and behold !
 The whole at last redeemed and glorified.
 Bid thou thine Angel, Lord ! of all thy Sons
 Observant most, to whom this orb was given
 To guard and guide, and all its indwellers
 Obediently to thee ; but once sin-lapsed,

Now part restored, to us descending, bring
The comfort of thy pardon, and pure bliss.
Thus praying, Heaven still looking on, (and know
When Deity would reveal Himself in soul
Or mission, He an effluence fulmines forth,
A flash of His self-luminous plenitude;
Into an angel form, instinct with life
Immortal as His Thought, and so assumes
An essence apprehensible,) came down,
His robe of light, sun-brooch made round them day;
Our angel guide, great Beniel, whom myself,
And all my bright companions cognizant now
Of his beneficent history and his world's,
Alike eventful, knew well; and he stood,
Shone on his breast sublime a meteor sun,
The sisterly twain between: The elder rose,
Full pale; leapt up the younger, blithe at heart:
Whom, by the hand, the angel softly took;
And said, O thou, who watchedst, and hadst faith,
What shall be thy reward? If I, she said,
Have done well, 'twas from reverence of our God,
And love of His divine love; this thy bride,
Predestined from the first to thy bright breast,
Being infinitely more worthy of thy love,
Than I, his handmaid, to proclaim the names
Only of countless virtuous attributes
Which own him Lord for ever. What though sin
Serpent-like fanged her, and she fell, I knew
Thou, God! couldst touching heal her; and thy power
To do good, equalled by thy will, whose love's
World wide. Were aught to me of guerdon due,
It were, to serve, love her, and dwell with both.
Be then to her the vow first promised, now
Performed; and troth-pledge in espousals end.
With penitent gratitude then the royal bride
Who had once so tormented the younger, then,
In all her queenly beauty cast her down,
And clasped her handmaid's knees, her sister's knees,
And wept amain. But her the Angel raised,
And with bland smiles saluting each, both blessed.
Come ye with me, he said, belovèd, come;
Be one my sister and be one my bride,
Each as the other dear, each like divine.
The handmaid's faith hath saved the mistress' throne.
The world's wide doomring ours, shall neither this
Usurpful of sway premature; nor this
With less than all content, lack claim to use
Equal and just regality; one with mine,
Of God predestinate; and or there, or here,
Our spirits' home be Heaven; and Heaven is where
We best can serve the All-father and our kind.
Then one by either hand he led them up,

This with the holy presence and august,
 Most like the mother goddess, city crowned,
 Now tiar'd as with the towers of Paradise ;
 That, with the lucid crescent on her brow,
 To the high seats of old prepared for both
 Beneath God's footstool, which all things create
 And temporal, subdivides from His, eterne ;
 And all the Angels and the Spirits blessed,
 Who, wise and pure, temptation had withstood,
 Yet wiser, humbler now, for victory won,
 Awaiting hopeful their return who erred,
 And theirs who had taught to err, serenely dwelled
 Around the sisterly twain in Angel world,
 Concentric with the Spiritual Sun, which rules
 Those skies supernal ; and the orb whose face
 To its original brightness now returned,
 Shone gloriously. And Wisdom, like of old,
 From one to other, as a holy thought
 Pervades a gladsome circle, praising God
 Profoundly filled and happily every soul.
 Smiled the all-gracious God ; and Heaven then saw
 Reflected in the universal face
 Divine humanity lifts, all sphered, and born
 As of eye, eye-glance, the undeemed similitude
 It bears the unlikenable ; as sky and sea,
 This bosoming but an imaged infinite,
 Unimageable, embraces all finite.
 The Eternal all sire smiled ; and from his throne
 Stretched out the hand of blessing o'er the world ;
 And blessed it was, for ever, blessed it is.

FESTUS. God's justice done, the faultful Angels lost
 Deceivers and deceived were ; speak !

ANGEL OF EARTH. Condemned.

Doubtless to punishment and fine condign,
 Thenceforth to mourn their sin and expiate best
 They may, their foul idolatrousness of soul,
 And mysteries of o'er many godded faith,
 By sad self cure, stern penitence and return
 To truth (by them long honoured, spiritual truth
 Celestial known) though falseliest derelict ;
 We know, as God is just ; but what their end,
 He sole who made them pure. with mental force
 Enough to have quelled all reason's paltry foes ;
 Knows, and deliberates ; but who pitying all,
 All to punishment just ; perdition not
 Endless, assigned ; with hope of ultimate grace,
 By proof of penitent self lustration, sense
 Of culpable pride, and wrong of violate law,
 Lightened ; which sole, hell's adamant chain
 Solves ; and time's irons acetouswise eats through ;
 Nor less knows he, and more, what each deserves,
 Who started first their fall ; nor boldly showed

His hand of guile as once, but skilled adept
 In ruinous art, taught basely to prefer
 To the highest, their nature's meanest principles ;
 Their love of ease, power, luxury. Spirit of Ill !
 Why lo ! the Evil one hath vanished. Much
 I marked him writhing with remorse and shame
 As to me seemed, the while that woe I limned,
 Complex and ever deepening, sin had burned
 Into our orb's breast ; and that but to evade
 Looked half impossible, memory keenly traced
 What oft I have viewed, when facing north, nor far
 From where the sun's broad scales gan night to o'erbow
 With half the day's weight due ; and cottier rude
 Of ruder glen, upon the steep hill side,
 Huge heap of weed and haulm of summer, raked
 From lands discropped now, fires ; the pale blue fume
 Soars bulkily ; and in wreathed volume asks,
 From every jutting turn of the glen, escape,
 Ere miserably dispersed in air ; so sought,
 With each fresh incident of the varied tale,
 Plainly but vainly, too, our Spirit of Ill,
 Retreat with forces whole.

FESTUS. Nor only such.
 So far as no disturbing speech, his word
 He hath saved to thee, intact ; but less perchance
 The exposure pained him of defeated scheme,
 Than the untroublous end of one who had erred,
 And been forgiven, his pride disgusted.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Know
 Hope for one world, one soul, is hope for all,
 Crown thou thy heart with that imperial truth.
 And now away, Him track we by the bounds
 Of furthest space.

FESTUS. Be with me to the end.

XXII.

Material masses these, which to the soul
 Of reason assured that all things made, finite,
 Imperfect, and distinguishable from God,
 Contained in Him, not he in them, good end,
 As bound serve, and commensurable of thought,
 Which Him, the sole immeasurable, demark
 From that he hath made, and spiritual contrast
 'Gainst aught material though it overpeer
 The edge of night and nothingness. Nor yet
 Inevitably, in prayers of prostrate crowds,
 Vows of embattled nations, on their knees
 Each thirsting for the other's blood, on plea
 Of coveted territory, or boundary, scored
 On mountain tops or river-beds, such gusts
 Thick, selfish, sottish, pierce the heavenly air
 Like one pure soul's intaminate breath, to God.
 With whom rests all decree for world or soul
 For angel or for nation.

The World's Outermost Orb.

FESTUS, ANGEL OF EARTH, LUCIFER.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Here, upon the utter verge of infinite space,
 Lo, Kosmiel, Heaven's great centinel, whose eye
 Subservient, scans creation ; and for aid
 To soul finite, memorially preserves
 The records of existence ; all the growth
 Maturity and age of systems ; ends,
 Sudden or gradual, of air's errant orbs,
 The advance of mind, and gain of absolute good,
 O'er sin and ignorance, in the eternal sphere.
 Great, and in duty great, o'er all preferred,
 All serves he strictly, strictliest serving God ;
 He, longing most to mark the end of Time,
 Who now, as the abdicating Sun lays down
 His sceptre golden shafted, and resigns,
 At eve, to ocean's mutinous rout of waves,
 All kingship, rounds him towards his western gates,
 The gates of exile, never to return ;
 He sees us ; and our volatile rest, not mean
 To him, nor meaningless, be sure, will note.
 But speak to him no word.

FESTUS.

His look restrains.

ANGEL OF EARTH. God's speechless intermediary, twixt Him
 And his intelligent universe ; angel he
 Of silence, who the unworded prayer collects,
 Which rises, hour by hour, through the broad whole,
 From angel, man, sphere, soul, and suffering life
 All-where ; intelligent, but to higher, oft

Reckless, or arrogant, subject ; and presents
 Before the throne ; presents ; his heart too full
 Of creatures' self-inflicted woes, and sense
 Of virtue's best aims lost, unblest, to voice
 Articulate one plaint before the Power,
 Incognizant not of aught that haps ; but pledge
 To the angel of pure duty. Pass we on !
 The universe is but the gate of Heaven.
 See from this highest orb, the crown of space,
 And footstool to the Infinite, thou mayst gain
 Already, a glimpse of glory unconceived.

FESTUS. See, how yon angels stretch their shining arms,
 Wave their star-haunting wings, which gleam like glass,
 And locks, that look like morning's, when she comes,
 Triumphant, in the East. Is this their joy
 O'er some world-penitent ?

ANGEL OF EARTH. Lo, there it rides ;
 Blessed to discharge on Heaven's all peaceful shores
 Its long accumulate load of thinking life ;
 Its deathless freight of souls, long tested, tried ;
 Pilgrims of time and space, freed, perfected.

LUCIFER. Yon guilty orb, of hesitating light,
 Slow looming there on its dark path, goes up,
 At the hour forewritten, as do all worlds, to God,
 To judgment : and the earthquake groans we hear,
 Which rend its adamant breast, and mar
 Silence and symphony alike, forebode
 Its agonizing doom.

FESTUS. And grieves not Heaven
 With world, or soul, lost, as with saved, it joys ?

ANGEL OF EARTH. How may immortals mourn at the decree
 Of righteous wisdom, in itself to them
 A bliss to view, being proof of the divine
 And infinite perfections. Is't not just
 Justice be realized, if late ; and there,
 See one example in the skies prepared
 To admonish and remind of that to come.

FESTUS. But why repented it not in time ?

LUCIFER. Perchance,
 It held not penitence needed. What, if proud,
 It recked nought ? Time, may be, is for it yet.
 Ask of the Angel, who is angel both,
 Of the great world and silence. He for once,
 Much time is on his hands, might reel you off
 A skein of fine advice.

FESTUS. I dare not.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Know
 What unto us is time stands before God
 Eternity ; though concurrent act and doom,
 Each claim, yet intermediate of effect,
 Is equity. This for deed irrevocable
 Repentance substitutes, self-condemnative,

And expiative remorse.

LUCIFER. And more than this,
They keenliest know who most repudiate good,
And for ill strive. Repentance is the grief
For, and effectual abstinence from sin
Creature can scarce attain to without God ;
But with Him, all is feasible.

FESTUS. Cloudy and clear
By turns thy words, as heaven, I know not what
To think, nor how to act.

LUCIFER. It is natural. Who
Can hit, but as appointed him ? Who aim
But as permitted ? God gives all their ground,
Bow, arrow, mark, prize, eye and arm, and all ;
All life's conditions, origin, mean and end.
Forefixed of God, His fates revealed, as hid
In words till now concealed of prophet truth,
Under the buried basements of the skies,
Shall yet, I have heard, o'erthrown these, reappear.

ANGEL OF EARTH. All God hath said shall take effect, whose
words
Are lifeful forces, causal potencies
Of that they foredetermine ; so, O soul,
Not difficultly, for thus thy mute reserve
Of speech divine, I, as half absorbed in doubt,
Conceive ; and thou celestial scenes, and tongues,
Shalt learn, not ineffective to express.

Enough. Be of good courage. That we know
Than men more, tell we not, unbid ; and thee
Behoves use all free will ; whose holy cause
Mind thou at heart revere, in earth, as Heaven.

LUCIFER. Meanwhile, glance downwards from this coping
world,
Ere higher risen, and know to the extreme
Of utter space, where not an atomic mars
The void invisible, easier 'twere to cast
A lead, and total its velocity ; pierce
All space, nor cross light's path, than fathom man's
Dark heart, or sound the hollows of his soul.

FESTUS. Whether the greater sinner that mean nature
All these life spheres which dominates, or thou
World-spirit of evil, arch foe of God, and doomed
One day to perish in the eternal fire
Of His wrath, wrath of Deity thus, in whom
As they begin, may all things end, I know not ;
I only feel God loves but perfectly,
Nor can love, but his own ; the spirit of good.
Listen ; I hear the harmonies of Heaven,
From sphere to sphere, and from the boundless round
Re-echoing bliss to those serenest heights
Where angels sit, and strike their emulous harps,
Wreathed round with flowers, and diamonded with dew ;

Such dew as gemmed the ever-during blooms
 Of Eden winterless, or, as night by night,
 The tree of life wept, from its every leaf,
 Unwithering. Now, in solemn lapse I hear
 The music of the murmur of the stream
 Which through the bridal city of the Lord
 Floweth all life, for ever ; nay, catch the breath,
 Through its star-shadowing branches, of that tree,
 Transplanted now to Heaven, but once on earth,
 Whose fruit is for all beings, breathed of God,
 Oh ! breathe on me, inspiring spirit breath,
 Oh ! flow to me ye soul-reviving waves ;
 Freshen the faded soul that droops and dies.

LUCIFER. It is plain that here what man craves, God hath
 willed.

XXIV.

Enter now Heaven. Even man's deathly life
 May be there, by God's leave. Once brought to God
 The soul's probation and foredoom, and heaven's
 Designs towards man, whole, individual, shew
 Fuller by light, of love parental. There,
 God's will shall be our own ; all spirits be his.
 A lightning revelation of the heavens
 And heavenly life, to spirit whose highest aim
 Was lowliest to adore the All-good, mistold
 Of old, and much too oft by truthless tongues ;
 To adore the unity essential, sole,
 Of God the All-Sire of Being ; source and end ;
 And though less hard to shape, o'er air's bright heights,
 The wide-winged wind, He will forgive who owns
 Names like the Zealous, like the merciful ; we
 This moment, and all life, all spirit, all soul,
 Mind, matter, being as much within His presence,
 And known through, like a glass film in the sun,
 As though we stood upon the star-stoned courts
 Of his celestial city. Where He is
 He is all ; one, infinite, personal Deity.
 Earth's final doom, man's triumph, peace supreme,
 Foreshewn ; illative each of other's end.

Heaven. THE DEITY, ANGELS, GUARDIAN ANGEL. *FESTUS and*
LUCIFER entering. ANGEL OF EARTH, ARCHANGELS.

ARCHANGELS. Infinite God, thy will is done ;
 The world's last sand is all but run ;
 The Night is feasting on the Sun.

LUCIFER. All-being God, I come to thee again ;
 Nor come alone. Mortality is here.
 Thou badest me do my will, and I have dared
 To do it. I have brought him up to Heaven,
 Assigned for a time to mine indulgent hand,
 That thou, just judge, mayst judge 'twixt him and me.

GOD. Thou canst not do what is willed not to be.
 Suns are made up of atoms ; heaven of souls.
 And souls and suns are but the atomies
 Of the body I God indwell ; the natural form
 Of mine infinite essence.

LUCIFER. Mortal, here
 Await, the while I parley fate.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Why, now,
 Spirit of ill, rufflest heaven's calm ?

LUCIFER. I will say.
 Is not this creature, by successful wile
 Yet mine ? Have I not caused him waste his years
 In search of lore forbidden, forgotten ? in chase
 Of intermittent dreams philosophy gives
 Brief brain life to, and vague, of wisdom housed
 'Mong men, and virtue homed ; realities vain
 Such as the eye, true key of heaven, shapes forth
 Imaginative, from clouds ; in stern essays
 Futile, to o'erflesh with sense the iron limbs
 Cold science moulds of some mechanic thing
 She calls man Godless, in persuading wealth,
 Of leave to toil most liberal, to impart
 Of his hoards, or lands some share (what right have men
 One element more than other to forestal ?)
 To the unmonopolist mass ? And sins not one
 Who God's best gift, life, in irrational plans,
 Immoderately benevolent, wastes, though fair
 His final aims, like grossly, even as wight
 Who from air's aureate mists would wring out gold,
 Or from seas silver, and his charity stake
 On success, clammed meanwhile his poor ? All this,
 In secret conclave with aspiring friends,
 To work men's welfare in their own despite,
 He wish-content, by act not, not even will,
 (To wish is weakness, mind's strength is to will,)
 Schemes such designs to realize ; but blends,
 Alternate now, with aims of meanest range,
 With luxuries, beauty's charms, love's witcheries ;
 As well may be, thou absent.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Wish and will
 Are his, I know, for good, yet ; and of good's
 Least sparkle Heaven is thrifty ; ends, too, these
 Solid enough, beget sometimes in deeds.

LUCIFER. Solidity alas, thou and thy charge
 Alike lack. Prime in the precipitate reel
 Poor Pleasure, (nought more sadly frivolous

On earth) leads, headlong whirls this wilful soul ;
 Or, as trim craft, with lights at mast and bow,
 Lured on by fraudulent torch ; of flattering shoal
 Suspectless ; heedful nought of sunken reef,
 Or monitory wave, here bright, there dark,
 Comes dancing, to perdition ; wreckers laugh ;
 Rich, saidst thou, in time's coming honours ; grave
 That should be, with predestined empire's trust ;
 Earth's hope ? Pleasure's, my pampered slave's, arch-drudge,
 Behold him, he is here.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Know, sophist fiend !
 Life's happier gifts, youth's privileges, the heart's
 Spring growth of love, joy-fraught, may e'er be used,
 And innocently ; even not with views forestrained
 To the end of being. Man's pleasure in the world,
 His nature made to each fit, theirs except
 Who twilight sense of future heaven command,
 And promissory perfection unfulfilled ;
 Yet, in its union with Divinity, sense
 Still glorious judged 'gainst theirs who see will not ;
 Is born of socialty ; but in the eterne,
 Such joys as vanities smirch not ; love of self
 Degrades not ; folly fouls not, spirit disclaims,
 For trivial things writes venial ; to all soul
 Yields grace, which more than covering all offence
 Defective, keeps them sealike incorrupt,
 While those of pure and godly will, whose souls
 Self bound are to divine ends, pleasurable life
 Know in that only wherein God's delight
 Consists ; and man's with His, unites and ends
 In self, in Deity ; who nor motive, good,
 Nor end knows, other than Himself. Thou errest,
 If therefore him thou deem'st almost thine, thine
 By weight accumulate of mere levities. These
 Ruin not for aye. God hath not so aspersed
 The nature He ennobled as to charge
 Its shield with sable simply. Even now,
 This soul, mine erewhile ward, hath haply learned
 Revulsive, to hate vanity, shun the show
 Of luxury, idlesse, and life's glittering baits
 Thou lurest with. Pause, and see ! In yon star-scales
 Pendent in heaven, whose weights are worlds, one soul
 Outworths, this one life's well and ill, at large,
 Show thus far, level balance. What as yet
 Imponderable, but all decisive, life's
 Brief lapse may add, thou knowest not.

LUCIFER. This I know :
 Wide fields be mine yet, many a vowed ally ;
 Aids irresistible. Helldom's strength I'll stretch,
 To touch mine end. Power's trustiest aids to learn
 Is now his aim ; doubtless, that he may best
 Cozen and cajole those smootheners of his way

Thronewards, he most concerts with. Can such ends
 Be innocent, of themselves? Nor this alone.
 He may not doubt God's Being, he being here ;
 But he hath heard earth's sagest sophists doubt
 If God's eternity soul's deathlessness
 Could warrant, or the world's ; and hold the whole,
 God, and his throne, the firmament, and all,
 Might some day topple o'er into the abyss
 Of absolute nothing ; he in truth's bright track
 Treading, he thinks, who such instructors seeks.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Truth's veriest shrine, felicitative of soul
 He seeks, I know. Nor public rite, belief,
 Nor tenet utterable shall all content
 The aspiring spirit, earth's farthest bent to explore,
 Truth's truest, space's highest.

LUCIFER. Who lives to beg
 Always of woods their shade, may live to lose,
 In them, himself. Let well be ; 'tis enough,
 Good things will rightly rule their own progress,
 Let ill be, and it gallops towards its end ;
 Grows, shadow like, at once enormous, bred
 Of kindred darkneses. The heart inane
 Of mystery let him pierce ; the maze where eld's
 Misfaiths, with heresies new in endless round
 Err ; pride demure falls quickliest.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Falls he not.

LUCIFER. Oh, he is bound to fall.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Not bound, but free.

LUCIFER. I know him free to doubt not only men
 Are free ; but free to attempt to efforce the will
 Of other.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. That were sin indeed.

LUCIFER. Indeed !

Oh trust me I foresee results, if cause
 Mine be not to control.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. For that may Heaven
 Be thanked by all, by none more than thyself.
 God through me speaks.

GOD. What wouldst thou, Lucifer,
 With him thou hast brought here with thee ?

LUCIFER. Show him God.

GOD. No being, on part of whom death's curse through faith
 Transfigured into blessing, rests were it only
 Upon his shadow, looks on God and lives,
 Save by divine permission.

LUCIFER. Look and live.

Look, Festus ! look.

FESTUS. God, sole and onemost ; God,
 Eternal fountain of the infinite, thou
 On whose life tide the stars seem strown like bubbles,
 Forgive me that an atomie of being
 Hath sought to see its Maker face to face.

I have viewed all thy works, thy wonders ; passed
 From star to star ; from space to space, and feel.
 That to see all which can be seen is nothing ;
 And not to look upon thee, the Invisible.
 The Spirits I met all seemed to say, as on,
 Starwards, they sped, their lightning wings o'er me
 One moment slackening, with superior glance,
 I might not look, whate'er I were, on God.
 But thou this spirit beside me didst empower
 To make me more than them with gifts immortal.
 So when we had winged through thy wide world of things,
 And marked stars made and saved, destroyed and judged,
 I said, and trembled lest thou heardst me not,
 And madest thyself right ready to forgive,
 I would see God ere yet, I died, in Heaven,
 Searcher of hearts, and quickener ! I am here,
 Forgive, Lord !

GOD. Mortal, rise. Look on me.

FESTUS. Nought
 Unless like dazzling darkness, see I.

LUCIFER. Good !
 I foreknew how it would be. I am away.
 If living, I await thee in the sun.

FESTUS. Thy creature, God ! am I' Oh, slay me not,
 But bid some angel take me ; or I die.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Come hither, Festus.

FESTUS. Who art thou ?

GUARDIAN ANGEL. I am one
 Who have e'er, till late, been by thee, from thy birth.
 Thy guardian genius, thy good angel, I ;
 Restrict somehow to Heaven, at his demand,
 Who feared my warnings weighed more than his lures.

FESTUS. Till now, I knew thee not.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. I am never seen
 In the earth's low thick light, but here in heaven
 And in the air God breathes, I too am clear.
 From wonted charge on earth withheld, that God's
 Ends, by yon spirit late challenged, might shew plain
 In his own eyes, I have here sojourned, and now
 Leave asked of God, in view of all to come,
 And separation's aims attained, I seek,
 Him telling nightly thy day's thoughts and deeds,
 And watching o'er thee on earth, as here, again
 To attend thee through thy lifetime, I await
 God's fateful word permissive. Pray for me,
 As I for thee pray daily, and intercede.

FESTUS. Hear, Lord, the prayers of man and angel oned.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Earth's guardian angel's hear for man's ; and
 man's

For earth's ; and bless the united orison.
 Thou knowest, All-wise ! my life one ceaseless prayer ;
 Let me yet hope that prayer, that life, to thee

Prove acceptable ; and earth's dread end adjudged
Once, rest deferred.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Not always kindest prayer
Breathed even for other's joy is blessed ; but oft
Not granted, better shows ; or, but in part.

GOD. Not all Heaven's prayers, nor earth's combined, 'gainst Fate,
Whose reasons are breast-laws hidden in Deity,
Can of themselves prevail to supersede
His wise benevolence ; nor the sense of grief,
From curt experience sprung, with facile flow
Of tears, suffice to stay stern justice' hand,
All satisfying ; yet stretched not e'er to check
Pity's deep founts of their abstergent flow.
But fate's decree, ye angels, which concerns
Both, with yon Spirit of Evil's sequent course,
Howbeit to him unknown, ye yet shall learn
Irrevocable, as just. For though, all time,
By meanest spite impelled, Ill war 'gainst Heaven,
Other than this shows preferable to us,
Who measure not, 'gainst force finite, our strength ;
And, preferable, so best.

FESTUS. Rest can I none
Until Heaven's peace I know. Will God forgive
That I did long to look on Him ?

GUARDIAN ANGEL. He may ;
It is the strain of all high spirits towards him.

FESTUS. Creator of the vast yet fallible soul
Of all imperfect nature ; of all wrong
Cleanser not justifier ; dread trampler out
Of evil ; of sin presumptuous which could bring
Unbidden to thee the spirit while yet uncleansed
Of death's deep flood ; death-worthiest me of men,
Bid live ; that I to all thy love may teach,
Mighty in founding worlds, in making man,
Mightier in pardoning evil, and in sin
Annihilating for ever.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Lord ! thine eye
A moment fixed on sin, the culprit blot,
As a sun-shot cloud, incontinently, exhales ;
And destiny's page, once more reopened fair,
Looms in unwonted white.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Do thou, O Lord ?
Whose couchant power than Nature's active, more,
Awes into silence all these orbs, these hosts,
Forgive !

GUARDIAN ANGEL. It is felt thou art forgiven. Through all
The conscious infinite of celestial life,
A sense of the Eternal thought, inspired
By pure humanity of the Deity, fills,
And mediatizes all things. Thou couldst not
Even if thou wouldst, behold God ; masked in dust,
Thine eye on darkness lights ; but when flesh-freed,

And the dust shaken off the shining essence
 God shall glow through thee as through living glass,
 And every thought and atom of thy being
 Shall guest his glory, be o'erbright with God.
 Hadst thou not been by faith immortal made
 For the instant, know, thine eye had been thy death.

FESTUS. And this is Heaven ! Lead on ! the Heaven all souls
 In all the spheres most long for ?

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Yea, for this ;
 The state of holiness with bliss of life
 Mortal to life angelic raised ; made one.
 Nor marvel heaven hath marvels ; such as now
 I come to show thee, and with God's blessed aids,
 The angels of His presence make acquaint.
 Not that He needeth aid ; but life to endow
 With virtue and use and joy is His delight.

FESTUS. And this is Heaven ! I knew it.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. It may well be,
 Thou hast been here in the spirit. For, mortal, know
 Heaven is inferior to all spheres, all souls.
 The secret chamber 'mid creation's breast.
 Where alway may be found Life's master, used
 That viewless key thou knowest of.

FESTUS. I believe.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Lo ! the recording angel !

FESTUS. Him I see
 High seated there, the pen within his hand
 Plumed like a storm portending cloudlet, curved
 Half over heaven, and swift in use divine,
 As is a warrior's spear ?

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Mark now the book
 Wherein are written the records of all worlds.
 Which, fixed, collate with wandering, 'neath his eye
 Previsive, that illumining it construes ;
 Contrast with thoughts of deeds to come in spheres
 Once solar, nebulous now, make glad or grave ;
 Time's tidings to confirm, or sum the charm
 Of self-fulfilling prophecy.

RECORDING ANGEL. And here,
 Thine orb's end, mortal, mark thou nigh.

FESTUS. Ah me !
 The end of that, Heaven once held Heaven's ally !

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Turn then the leaf.

RECORDING ANGEL. Yet is't not every world
 Laid open to its axis thus by stroke
 Of death, hath fate like hopeful.

FESTUS. It is man's joy ;
 And not to us without cause special. See
 Earth's angel guardian, gladdening in the thought.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. There too, see mighty Michael, dight not now
 In panoply sun blinding, nor on war
 Exterminant bent, though looking towards a field

Of thunderous battle to be fought yet, big
 With creatural fates, pacific, joys to scan
 At God's behest, the book of life where beam
 The names in starry brilliants of God's sons ;
 Names long enrolled, foregiven, which angels learn
 By heart of those predestined chiefs to be,
 Of battailous hosts in that soul hallowing war.
 Deadly and everlasting, waged by good
 'Gainst evil. And if within that scroll of life
 Thy name inscribed for good were, wouldst thou see it?

RECORDING ANGEL. As leader, or as follower, it is writ,
 As victor, or——

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Enough ! It cannot be
 As vanquished. Search for such the files of death.

FESTUS. And if it be, not I dare look ; though, seen,
 Henceforth to me were that constellate word
 More, brighter, clearer, than all stars.

RECORDING ANGEL. To Heaven,
 It is bright or dim as actions cause.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Raise still
 Thine eyes. Lo ! Midst yon nebulous cloud of thrones
 Rayed inwards brightlier than withoutwards, one
 Expectant waits its occupant ; the chosen
 All round, their gleaming thronelets, from that mount
 Of light hewn, which ere light create, or night
 Never create, was, heaven's eternal base
 Whereon God's throne is 'stablished, gladdening, press.
 For whomso kept, the invited rest is sweet ;
 Were grateful ; and 'tis vacant. Sit on it.

FESTUS. Nay, nothing more than sight will I forestall.

RECORDING ANGEL. Good. Brighter seat than that thou ey'st,
 I have seen

Hurled, like a star deject o'er being's brink,
 To pre-eternal nothing, unconceived.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Speak, angel of salvation, is this well ?

PHANUEL. It is well. God rejoiceth mightily,
 In silence, as of unextended space,
 In his forechosen ; and Heaven's love-speechless choirs
 In his elect one's choice.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Turn now and vlew
 Where spirits redeemed, beside the river of God,
 Quaff everlasting peace ; hence joy profound
 The Heavenlies draw, withdrawn ; preparing aye
 For higher and intenser Being ; and here,
 Heaven's upper fountains spiritual, see, where flow
 Life's waters soul-regenerative, like aged
 With those eternal emanations shown
 To saintliest sage alone, which hang suspense
 High o'er the firmament of created things,
 Pretemporal, swiftening towards the abyss of time ;
 Founts, Raphael, healing angel, once of eyes
 Earthly, the vision purger, bidden of God,

Presides o'er ; laved wherewith the immortals cleanse
 Their sight to penetrate the essential light
 In all things hidden ; and, visible but on earth
 To eyes oped inmost, (even as that stone,
 Of fabulous function, with the adept renowned,
 Seed of the sun, through filial fire turned all
 It touched to solar gold,) the spirit beloved
 Informs with godlihood impute ; all soul
 To the great soul thus uniting. Such the bliss,
 The power vouchsafed to man, such faculties.
 Yet but the surface shadow canst thou see ;
 The substance is to be. There Gabriel, chief
 Of messengers evangelist to worlds,
 Of good nigh hopeless, proud, or, self condemned,
 Declares God's warnings ; or, predictive, charged
 With tidings gracious, to the spirits around
 Expounds His promises. Nor vastier boon
 To angel world, or man-world, Deity gives
 Than prophet soul, in divers tongues foretold,
 May be, in sundry lands and ages, life
 To enlighten and to judge. Behold yon group
 Of blessed ones. In their docile mien and eyes
 Grateful, the spirit shows how all ill, all doubt
 With them, hath ceased, as death hath ceased.

FESTUS.

But see,

Hither they come rejoicing, marvelling. Mark
 How all with kindest wonder look on me.
 Mayhap to their pure sense I tell of earth,
 Some seem as though they knew me, I know none.
 But how claim kinship with the glorified,
 Unless with them like glorified ; nay, first
 With them forehallowed, even if chose ? Yet, yes !
 It is, it must be, that angelic spirit,
 By some miraculous power, addressing me
 Draws me towards her, speechless, gestureless ;
 My heart outruns me ; mother ! See thy son.

ANGEL MOTHER. Child, how art thou here ?

FESTUS. God hath let me come.

ANGEL MOTHER. Art thou not come unbidden, and unprepared ?

FESTUS. Forgive me, if it be so. I am come,
 And ever have I said, do aught I might ;
 And ever have I hoped, say, aught I would,
 There are two who will forgive me, God and thou.

ANGEL MOTHER. As reason bids, forbids, or dubious deems,
 Do I. Heaven's great parental heart, more wise,
 More cognizant, of his creatures than ourselves
 Of ourselves are, more merciful may show
 Than even a mother's. It is for him alone
 To say, I all forgive, may he, I pray.

FESTUS. Dear angel mother, thou art blessed, and blessed
 I, too, thee knowing kindest of all kin,

Uplift for mere humility to God's feet.

ANGEL MOTHER. Son of my hopes on earth, and prayers in heaven,

God's love is infinite infinitely even more
Than is our imperfection. Promise, child,
To love him for this privilege, more than ever,
And for his boundless kindness shewn towards me.
Now my son hear me ; for heaven's hours are not
As earth's ; all's all but lost not given to God.
Oft have I seen with joy thy thoughts of heaven,
And holy hopes, which track the soul with light,
Rise from dead doubts within thy troubled breast,
As souls of drownèd bodies from the sea,
Upwards to God, and marked them so received
That oh my soul hath overflowed with rapture,
As now thine eye with tears. But fear, my son
Beloved, fear thou ever for thy soul ;
It yet hath to be saved. Nor can I hold
Myself or thee secure of that desired,
Till time be passed and gone. Nought perfect stands,
But what's in Heaven. All kind, God long hath caused thee
Think upon him. Think alway. Ere I left
Earth, with the last breath air would spare for me,
The last look life would bless me with, I prayed,
And half the prayer I brought myself to God,
Thou mightst be wise and happy ; and now, behold,
Thou art unhappy and unwise.

FESTUS. Beloved
And blessed one, I rejoice that thou art clear,
And all who have cared for me, of my misdeeds.
Thy spirit was on those who nurtured me.
All word and practice that could be of good,
Wast to me given ; so that my sin is splendid.

ANGEL MOTHER. Thou mockest reason.

FESTUS. Know, then, if I have sinned,
I have sinned sublimely.

ANGEL MOTHER. Such nor better makes
Nor less, sin's self. Who sins sublimely, sins
Profoundly : and so suffers.

FESTUS. Be it so.

ANGEL MOTHER. Splendour is none in agony, nor in sense
Of conscience pitiless morsure, which assaults,
And so devastates soul's substantial force.
Hope scarce can find a hope whereon to build.

FESTUS. Nay, I am glad I suffer for my faults.
I would not, if I might, be evil and happy.

ANGEL MOTHER. God laughs at evil by man made, and
allows it,

In common with all free life, scope to act :
The vaunt of mountainous evil, and the power
To challenge Heaven as from a molehill, child !

FESTUS. Few better hearts than mine hath God e'er made,

However much one fail of their sage craft,
 Who in the world's long, dull, dark, streets of forms,
 By towering follies varied, brick themselves,
 And call their dreary existence, social life.

ANGEL MOTHER. Heart goodness shows its truth in self-restraint,

In acts of peace and kindness. Hand and heart
 Are one thing with the good, as thou shouldst be.
 Corruption's splendour hath no vital power.
 Content in sin shews apathy, not peace.
 Do my words trouble thee? Then, treasure them.
 Pain overgot gives peace; as martyr's death
 Earns heaven. All things that speak of heaven speak peace.
 Peace hath more might than war. High brows are calm.
 The host of stars is still. Their silence weighs
 More mightily with the mind than though they spake
 Thousand tongued, musically; and truths like suns
 Stir not; though systems round them come and go.
 Mind's step is still as death's; and all great things
 Which cannot be controlled, whose end is good.
 This peace, God's peace, seek thou; and learn to love.
 Behold yon throne; there, love, faith, hope are one:
 There, judgment, righteousness and mercy work
 One and same end, Salvation. Vengeance such
 Worthy of God! How else should He, all-good,
 Treat evil, unless by bettering, or due means
 Granting it to ameliorate? himself
 Avenge how, but by right for wrong? how wrath,
 Rejoice in, save by ill slain? As on earth
 Destruction restoration means to the pure
 Of elements world corrupted; so, by death,
 From bodily bonds and the repugnant sense
 Of merited limitation freed, the soul's
 Humanity most is perfected in Heaven.

FESTUS. Myself I did not make, nor plan my soul.
 I am no angel nursed in the lap of light,
 Nor fed on milk immortal of the stars,
 Nor golden fruit grown in the summery suns.
 How am I answerable for this my soul?
 My master, free with me, as fixed with fate?
 As a star which moves a certain course in mode
 Certain, its liberties are laws, its laws
 Tyrannic, under God. All that we do
 Or bear, is settled from eternity
 Endless, beginningless. To act is ours,
 Quite sure, not less, all done, or good or ill,
 Is for God's glory away, and is ordered.

ANGEL MOTHER. If soul were but an organ, and no power
 Of good or evil had haply within itself,
 More than the eye hath power of light or dark,
 God fitting it for good, and evil being
 Good in another way we are not skilled in;

The good we do of his own good will ; the ill
 Of his own letting ; man were simply slave
 Choiceless, of dignity void, nor grandly impowered
 To make law, as to obey ; a lustrous blank,
 A perfect imperfection ; even as nature,
 All light in life, shines marshlike too in death ;
 With vagrant fires that haunt even rottenness.
 But worse with souls, that, wilfully unjust,
 We see reject their privileged walk with God ;
 Their source of true vitality lost ; and given
 So to degenerate life that all their powers,
 And splendid faculties, but decaying seem
 In sin, and flying off by elements ;
 Like wandering worlds which scare the extremes of space,
 With fiery visitation, or in black
 Abyss of preordained destruction, slow
 Perish, self dissipative ; a continent, now
 Sloughing, a climate, oh ! to such, woe worth !
 What shall be done to them ?

FESTUS.

Probational life

Doubtless endures as long as justice claims.
 All may not live again, but all which do,
 Must change perpetually, even in heaven ;
 And not by death to death, but life to life.

ANGEL MOTHER. No ; step by step, and throne by throne, we rise
 Continually towards the Infinite ;
 And ever nearer, never near, to God.

FESTUS. To follow towards perfection man's best end
 And happiest makes ; who deem they have attained,
 Are nowise nigh. Our merit is to have served
 On earth the cause of good, peace, freedom, truth ;
 Each ultimately Him. That God enjoins,
 That God permits, twain wheels are, the world-car
 Runs upon glibly enough, and will, to the end.
 Law moral bars all wrong ; law spiritual all
 Affirms of right ; free choice, our fate decides.
 All right is right divine. A worm hath rights,
 Kings leagued cannot despoil him of, nor sin ;
 The right to be treated with humanity.
 Yet wrongs, of privatives produced, themselves
 Serve, sometimes men ; their use have ; and, like wants,
 Are ofttimes well permitted to best ends.
 A double error sometimes sets us right.

ANGEL MOTHER. Not in sphere spiritual, nor books of doom.
 But if in man no absolute rule inhere,
 Of right and wrong, his God given conscience then
 Were of all things most base, which vacillant, acts,
 Sin palliating, condemning, pardoning sin.
 To serve is not to deserve. Who can claim
 Merit for well doing ; for exceeding not
 What's equitable ? Soul, be virtuous, just,
 Truthful, benevolent holy. What reward

Owes God, who made all rational, to thee
 For acting reasonably? Is virtue more
 Than moral reason? Thy reward be this;
 To know that God approves thy deeds, which done,
 Contribute to the unbounded joy He grants
 The Saints in Heaven; and this, too, from his own
 Joy o'erabounding. They have earned it not,
 Nor merited aught.

FESTUS. Demerit, then at least,
 In not being as we might be good, is all
 We can insist on, that is surely ours;
 Ours, by all titles; by escheat; default
 Of nearer kindred; and so inheritance;
 But though dismeritous thus, and fully equipped
 Our cause to implead, we are not, for that, all wise.
 Perplexed we oft see God's best purposes
 And kindest, brought about by dreadest sins;
 Time's triumphs, through wrongs deadliest, oft transpire.
 Twin nations struggle; and the earth sweats blood;
 A current generation is wiped off
 Like to an enemy's life from a sword's blade;
 And lo! Death's children from their hillocky homes
 Send forth a race to freedom sworn and peace.
 So in our passions waywardest, our best
 Affections; how predict their distant end?

ANGEL MOTHER. Learn thus how wisdom oft corrects man's
 wrong.

FESTUS. We note co-incidents. We lack a rule
 Persistently corrective of all ill.

Whereby effect and cause, are alike good.
 Is thunder evil? It may fright from sin;
 Or dew divine? It may undo a realm.
 Oft, men for innocent beauty's sake, their souls
 Deform; and for the high their thoughts debase.
 Does virtue lie in sunshine? sin, in storm?
 Or, is not each one natural, needful, best?
 How know we good from evil? How demark
 Essential this from that? And may not this
 Immediate, be that finally? We know
 Wrath and revenge God claimeth as His own.
 And yet men speculate upon right, wrong; ill,
 And well, as each of each annihilative,
 Like day and night, forgetting both one cause,
 The same original boast, of God's good will;
 Active, or passive as permission, claim.
 Sin's complice, traitor, judge and headsman, all.

ANGEL MOTHER. But conscience knows her mission; and tho'
 cowed

And crushed, her lineage; and her watchful seat
 Once from her stolen, but through sense of guilt,
 Restored, still claims as hers, God's assessor;
 Nor this sole, but through penitence due for sin,

And her self-purifying intent achieved,
She soars, transfigured, glorified to Heaven.

FESTUS. Or falls ; for ages lost ; perhaps, for ever.

ANGEL MOTHER. Nothing is lost in nature, least of all
The immortal spirit to deity ; proof and pledge
Triumphant, of his kindest attributes ;
His will to uplift, advance, expand, perfect
Each individual soul, and all unite
In one supreme perfection, of himself
The essential image ; every state and sphere
Of universal nature, a holy stage
Of purified amendment for the next
Creative birth, and graduated ascent,
Towards this celestial ; summing, centering all,
The excellences of being. Nay, no soul
Though in sin's lowest, blackest depth implunged,
Lost to the world, to angels, to itself,
Is lost to God ; but there it works his will
Patient, and burns conform with justice. Sin
Convinced bears penitence ; and from ignorant vice
Converted, springs wise virtue ; from mean greed,
Active beneficence never satiate, save
With welfare of some rational soul, secured,
Or compassed, charitably ; all virtues, means
To yet diviner ends, attainable still
By man, majestic in progression. Grace,
Knowledge and love, the sense of harmony,
And beauty of form, used rightly by the spirit
Studious of truth, are purifying powers ;
So, all things that to order and perfectness
Of nature tend ; the culture of pure thought, and art
Idoltrous not ; the sacred liberty of other's will.
Oh mayst thou never plot to infringe such right !
The politic freedom of earth's thousand states,
And all life's social blessings, crowned with peace.
And as earth's elements, not disunitive, pass
Each into other, wavelike, and possess ;
And as mind's powers, by thoughts perfective rules,
More eminently capacious show ; so range
Symmetric, our emotions with God's law,
Of highest good : and such is nature's crown.
But limiting not the Deity thus, him know
In such wise operative, that while in all
Proportion he delights, with mind create,
In rhythmic undulations of the light,
Commeasurable with space, even weakest things
Are yet to be made examples of his might ;
The most defective, of his perfect grace,
Whene'er he thinketh well ; so rounding all
Extremes in one complete simplicity
Of motive, mean intent.

FESTUS.

Oh, everything

To me seems good and lovely and immortal.
 The whole is beautiful ; nor can I see
 Aught wrong in man nor nature, aught not meant,
 As from his hands it comes who fashions all ;
 Holy as his formative word, the world itself
 His mightier revelation ; to whose sense
 All writ must be attuned ; all miracles made
 Like broadly just. He breathes himself upon us,
 Before our birth, as o'er the formless void
 He moved at first, and we with his spirit are all
 Livingly inspired. All things are God, or of God.
 For the whole is in God's mind what is a thought
 In ours. All that is good belongs to God ;
 And good and God are all things ; or shall be.

ANGEL MOTHER. God, in his own parental nature, knows
 All creatures and their possible powers ; for he
 By universal essence is ; and through
 His attributes, by limited mind alone
 Distinguished from his substance, to all made
 Imparts his virtues, and with reason impowers
 The creatures he, their author, throughlier knows,
 Than they themselves ; their course, their every lapse
 Exorbitant from the right, and glad return
 From firmamental exile, back to him ;
 Who mercifully forgiving sin, foreseen
 By precreative eye, yet not approves
 Ill, fruit of imperfection, save as test
 Of vital faith and patience in pure hearts.
 Thus all created good, or to good ends,
 Or sanctified, conduce. Man's highest bliss,
 In union with his source and crowning end,
 Is serving man and loving God ; his root
 And final flower, is when to vast surview,
 Raised of God's kingdom, the soul straitening bounds
 Of race, creed, temperament, o'ertopped, the spirit,
 All covetings, vain distinctions, aims, desires,
 To God surrendering, abnegates ; to him
 Being of beings, who all things vivifies ;
 Who his own goodness in his creatures seeks.
 He had already willed there modified ;
 His own intense perfection ; his divine
 Beauty and purity, as the sun in dew
 His reflex glory. So too the liberate soul,
 Rapt in the extatic gaze of joy he grants,
 And into commune raised with its cause, partakes
 Thought's freedom, truth's necessity, like divine ;
 Nay, questioning of eternity, fore-reads
 With angels, on God's face, the thoughts of peace
 And miracles of benevolence he conceives
 To enrich and bless all life with. But there lacks
 In souls like thine unsaved, and unexalted,
 The light within, the light of perfectness,

As 'tis in heaven. Here, time expert, all's seen,
 How oft the soul even strong, if tempted, falls.
 As some rock-towering lighthouse, which long years,
 Rolls its ubiquitous eye, cyclopic, vast,
 Sea-searching ; but to time's slow sap and siege
 At last consentful, leaves a gap, by groans
 Greeted from ruinous barques ; and 'neath the sea
 Lurking, exasperates every peril that once
 It luminously forbade ; so, stable and stern
 The virtuous soul I have seen long whiles command
 The future, marked and thanked by thousands saved
 Gloriously ; but fallen, lie hopeless now as thine
 O'ersurged, alas, by life's allurements. Pray,
 Such end be not thine ; for if thine, on earth,
 God only, it is, can raise it, and rebuild.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. And his, thy son's, he will yet raise. Since
 with me

I have shown him infinite wonders. We have oped
 And scanned fate's golden scroll wherein are writ
 In Truth's own hand all things to be, time's long
 Array of serried worlds, and all the fruit
 Of all their peopling occupants ; have seen
 The records of his being ; passed and to come,
 His long temptation, sin and suffering.

FESTUS. And hear it, O beloved and blessed, mine own
 Salvation.

ANGEL MOTHER. God, how great is He, in being,
 Infinite infinitely, in power and grace.
 But oh ! transcendent truth, when thus to one
 Poor spirit he gives his hand in love, he seems
 To impart his own unboundedness of bliss.
 Scarce worth destroying, one thinks ; less saving ; each
 Loves he, as all his equals were.

FESTUS. I know
 All I must henceforth go through, the doubts, woes,
 Passions of life ; which knowing, hinders not,
 Purificative trials by whose stern aid
 The spirit achieves perfection, sloughing off
 Snakewise, constraint of narrower being ; the world's
 Entanglements ; the snares of youth, I bear
 Obeyingly ; nor repine as when I erst
 Looked back, and saw how life had balked, foiled, fooled me.
 Fresh as a spouting spring upon the hills,
 My heart leapt out to lifewards ; little it thought
 Of all the vile cares that would rill into it ;
 The mean, low places it must coast ; the falls,
 The drains, the crossings, and the mill-work after
 God hath endowed me with a soul scorns life ;
 Not that he gave, but that I live ; and graced
 With an element over and above the world,
 Mixed in its masque, I find nor harm nor charm,
 Enough to attract to folly this, nor warp

From Wisdom, that. Indifference serves and saves.
 But the price one pays for pride is mountain high.
 There is a curse beyond death's rack ; a woe
 God hath put forth his strength in ; a pain past
 All our mad wretchedness, when some sacred secret
 Hath flown from out the encaging heart, care-closed
 Vainly ; the curse of a high spirit famishing,
 Because all earth but sickens it.

ANGEL MOTHER. Nay, confirm
 Thy spirit with godlier, say, with manlier thoughts.
 Contrast not earth-life with celestial ; both
 Variants of one existence deem ; the same
 This, but immutable save to happier ends.
 Here, as the general air, respired of all,
 All speak the mind of God whose world-like thoughts
 Heaven's multitudinous being suffuse, as beams,
 To one who curious treads the wavy panes
 Of ocean's floor gold-framed, through myriad squares
 Tempered, the sun, quickening the expanse with light.
 Here, all in all, we live ; the weakest soul
 His solar spirit partaking, as need bids.
 He not alone of things the conscious force,
 But conscience of all spirits who to heaven's
 Perfective science man's nature so adapts
 By gradual growth of virtue to attain
 Divinity, that he may the whole fulfil.
 These excellences of godhood are the modes
 Whereby, to us create, he makes himself
 Known, truth's source, end and centre, which supply
 With perfect sustenance each benevolent vow ;
 Each virtuous aim earth owns ; as justly fixed
 Towards the perpetual betterment of things,
 And reascension sourcewards of all souls ;
 Heaven's sole aim foreign to itself, which earth's
 Wisest and holiest spirits, truth-freed, that all
 May reach, none lost, together toil for ; here
 Only, perfection realized, where law
 Nature and liberty trined, are blessed. Nor doubt,
 If, as thou sayest, thy future life thou knowest
 And but its rudiments, surely, limned, perchance
 By eye imaginative, as yet in block
 Unhewn, the pillars of Time's temple ; still,
 In all things seek, and that sole, perfectness
 In nature, virtue, reason, faith ; which, used
 Rightly, to God unite the spirit outrayed
 From Him, and with essential Deity tinged.
 For while by various faults and flaws each soul
 Falls from that plane of perfectness ordained
 Comparative by its Lord, this, thoughtlessly
 That passionately, irrevocably none
 It may be ; not the less, God's saving love,
 By discipline drawn, by penitence, by pure life,

The spirit, self-strained from guile, illumines ; in time
 Relamps ; helps on its upward way ; dark, oft,
 Oft devious, painful ; now with word, sign, cheers ;
 And, not by wilful wrong persistent, stained,
 The pilgrim soul receives ; redeems ; restores,
 Redeifies. Hither come they from all orbs
 Perfective, souls perfectible, those except
 Who, loved with love eternal, of God called
 Spring to His breast. Here the hopes of earth's best hearts,
 The master aims of ages, for man's good,
 All nature's properties perfected, man's mind
 In God, the rational unity of the whole
 Embraces, and in meditating, grows blessed.

FESTUS. How radiant shew yon blessed souls.

ANGEL MOTHER. Know, child,

Each faithful thought of God, each saintly hope,
 Clear aspiration for earth's weal ; pure aim ;
 Beneficent deed ; each reverent service shewn
 To man's majestic nature, as to a pure
 Abstraction of Humanity deified ;
 Each generous thought that warms the social breast ;
 Here beams a ray of life divine, the frame
 Fills with e'er heightening beauty, and the whole
 Being perradiates with celestial light,
 Transfigurative ; which known, all choice of good
 The soul is capable of, will heaven foretel
 In us ; and His assured acceptance shew
 Token of the spirits' birth in man, whose mind
 Progressive, suffering, perfected, with peace
 Divine crowned, in itself all things made good,
 Thus harmonizes with other, and with God.

FESTUS. Behold the ebb of the life-tide of the world.

ANGEL MOTHER. It grieves not me. We sooner meet. Go,
 child ;

Fulfil thy fate. Be, do, bear ; and thank God.
 Be good, do good ; bear pains heaven-sent, resigned
 To God's corrective love ; and in the light,
 Soul ripening of his law, for the end prepare.
 To me it seems as I had lived all ages,
 Since leaving earth, and thou art yet scarce man
 Matured ; than that more, thou wilt never be.

FESTUS. It was not, mother, that I knew thy face ;
 The luminous eclipse that is on it now,
 Though it was fair on earth, would have made it strange
 Even to one who knew as well as he loved thee.
 And if these time-tired eyes ever imaged thine,
 It was but for a moment, and the sight
 Passed ; and my life was broken like a line
 At the first word ; but my heart cried out in me.

ANGEL MOTHER. Thee knew I well ; and now again to earth.

FESTUS. Yet, ere I hence, one dear embrace vouchsafe
 That like to him of old who but by touch

Of mothering earth stood unsubdued ; I, too
By spiritual salute of thine, may thrive
Stoutlier in worthiest matters, through all life
For virtue haply so conveyed.

ANGEL MOTHER. As yet,
Thy forward foot forbear. Not all thy steps
In life, have been by me approved ; nor all
Have tended upwards. Sifted from all sin
Self-will and self-deceit, when next thou comest,
Oh may I say but when, shalt thou from me
Win the asked-for blessing, still suspended hope.

FESTUS. Just be thy words, Farewell.

ANGEL MOTHER. If well thou dost,
Well wilt thou fare ; and I, in thee made glad.
Go, son ; and say to all who once were mine,
I love them, and expect them.

FESTUS. Blessèd one,
I go.

ANGEL MOTHER. I charge thee, Genius, bear him safely.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Through light, and night, and all the powers
of air

I have a passport.

ANGEL MOTHER. God be with thee, child.

FESTUS. Where, guardian, is the Spirit induced me here ?

GUARDIAN ANGEL. That Spirit is no more here. Behold him
gone

Like a spent thunder-cloud which, rolled away,
Bears in its shapes chaotic, visible proof
Of the distracting fires that rent its breast
Of force self-dissipative. Not long can he
Heaven's light, foretaste permitted thee, abide,
Thus eminently, wherein all these exult
From saint to seraph, hierarchies of bliss.
For known to all ye Angels is the good
God hath eternally decreed to man ;
The secrets of perfection yours ; but heaven's
High whispers and intense, the soul of Ill
Knows not, nor can know ; in the source of light
Sightless ; and means for ends misplacing ever,
Of his own acts incomprehensive, he
Glutting life's passionatest desires at full
And instigating soul's vainest aims, misdeems
To cause thee, spirit of earth, God lost, thyself
Forfeit to him ; albeit God all o'errules
To his own great ends in manner none forecasts.
But this know ; and, as spherelet nigh the sun,
Revels in lightful secrecy, my soul,
With heavenly insight penetrate, perceives
Down broadening vistas of futurity, how,
Him shall God's Angel, archetypal power
Of Heaven's divine humanity, now at hand,
Revisiting misreported hell, endure

To meet, and all his hosts with hope inspire
To earn, repentant, pride subject, heaven's peace,
Pardon and restoration.

ANGELS. Joyed we hear.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. For lo ! it is written in the Book of God,
Where spirits may learn aforesaid what is fate,
In endless prescience of world-winning love,
That, as by angel man through woman fell,
Through her, shall this first-fallen again too rise ;
All life in ultimate perfection linked
By him who oft-times chooseth meanest means
To compass world-vast purposes, whereby
God vindicates himself. Nay, thine own sphere,
The first fruits of the great destruction, earth,
Born of the mother night of ages once
Into a sad and struggling life, at last
Shall be most blessed hailed among the worlds.

ANGELS. All time, all place, is consecrate to God.
Man may do despite, but the ill redounds
To himself only. The world is holy still.
God's fane is unprofaned. Some graceless wretch
Blasphemes a holy sage. What harm ? The throat
Filled with scurrility only is defiled ;
Not seer, nor his pure word. So, too, all means
Have majesty, if used of God ; all ends
By him who made, ordained, are sanctified.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Come ; all is heaven before us.

FESTUS.

And I feel

Now happier, better, nobler for the words
Taught me of truth by one whom fate forbade
Beneath the sun, to teach. 'Tis, doubtless, best.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. See now where, like a journeying beam of
light

From the sun's arched crown, she moves, each orblet passed,
Enveloping in her shadow aureole-wise ;
Mark, too, where 'midst those radiant rounds, well nigh
With spirits elect replete, few void ; in sooth
One only primary, and its satellite seats,
All welcome her return. Soul, what seest thou
'Mid that celestial session ?

FESTUS.

Her I see

Revered, beloved, smile now, who here but late
Me counselled somewhat sadly, sagely still ;
And, usward pointing, with that finger used
God's gracious deeds to trace, her lowliest seat,
At feet of twain above who sit serene,
Brow-mitred with aerial gold, assumes.
Who be they ?

GUARDIAN ANGEL. That, mankind's First mother ; this
His, who mankind with loftiest creed enriched
Of divine Sonship, in God's spirit renewed ;
By virtue and repentance justified,

Act godlike imitate, and self-betterment ;
 Such, soul's sole way from earth to God the Truth ;
 And, nestling at their feet, she whom thou own'st
 Mother ; of mankind's last ; for thou art he.

FESTUS. Am I ? It is enough. I have seen God.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. True ; and hast passed all limits of all things
 So doing. Such a miracle in itself's
 A dispensation. That thou hast dared, and done ;
 Stood on the step which life eternal parts
 From instant nothing ; and like proofs of God's
 Tolerance divine towards man, and man's bold glance
 Inquisitive, proud, yet worshipful towards Him,
 Hold glad ; and be to thee such daring blessed.
 As when in actual space, here, 'neath our feet,
 Some new fired cometary we see, compact
 Of Heaven's selectest elements, ere yet made
 His first excentric orbit, haste to accost
 With homage and oblation due of light,
 The solar majesty ; till, hour by hour,
 The luminous throne, all false and fulsome dread
 Repudiating, approached, in flame-floods plunged,
 Long lost to ken he seems ; but soon emerged,
 A pure ætherial virtue of the void,
 Proud of persistent substance ; not absorbed ;
 Not in vacuity spent ; his beamy locks
 He shakes abroad illimitable ; nor stoops
 Life's vast ellipse to recognise, or trace
 The curve of his return. Let fixèd stars
 Their firmamental years ; their spatial range,
 And course recurrent, let the wandering worlds
 Vaunt henceforth, an' they will ; he, more than aught,
 'Mid things create, glorying as incombust.
 So thou, expert of Being, hast now beheld
 Its source and end, the Infinite One ; and liv'st.
 God and his great idea, the universe,
 His one and infinite thought aye being evolved,
 Are over and about us ; be the one,
 Being of beings, as thou hast known, in whom
 The spirits create of all essential spheres,
 Progressive and self purificative, work out
 Their ever bettering end,—God, only God,
 Worshipped ; be the other reverently proved.

FESTUS. Surely, there's rest in Heaven.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. As thou, ere now
 Hast seen, the spirits of men, the wise, brave, just,
 Daring and charitable, in those strange orbs,
 The angel of thy satellite crescent showed
 Their guerdon of self complete perfectness
 Taken at God's hand, through dateless terms of time,
 Triumphs of passed and future, not without
 Toil spiritual achieved and earnest deed ;
 So here behold how holy is well-won rest ;

And how the soul finite, by endless life
 Enriched, God crowns, betimes, with ease intense
 And renovative repose. The heart of heaven
 This, which in silent movement, like the soul's
 In spiritual commune with God, e'er lives.

GOD. Hear heaven, and earth, hear. Not in vain shall all
 My prophet-sons, inspired, through time, have preached
 Of justice, and Heaven's peace with man to come.
 The latter days shall yet their glory see.
 Let therefore peace and charity upon earth
 Start forth, as from the tender herb, the dew,
 'Mong all mankind one-minded. Let pure schemes
 Just and benevolent souls of ages gone
 Have nursed, mature ; let hopes sincere of all
 World-patriots, earth's best spirits for nature's weal,
 Fulfil themselves ; all godly plans bear fruit
 Of laudable profit ; freedom and the use
 Temperate of all Heaven's blessings, with just sense
 Of mutual rights, and service due 'mong all
 Brethren ; heart-purity ; holy life prevail
 Most presently earth over.

FESTUS. Peace, thou saidst,
 Lord ?

GOD. Peace, I say. Be war henceforth reserved
 To spiritual ends, and strife of virtuous soul
 'Gainst soul ill-willed, 'gainst evil ; and which if not,
 All limited life were aimless, fruitless ; lost
 All fitting use of powers ; all choice, all worth ;
 Such conflict holy, such war, war divine,
 Emancipative of spirit, as in accord
 With fate long uttered, shall the close of things
 Terrestrial, mark decisive, to the amaze
 Of all participant in the final field
 Of evil and good. Be thou right strong to bear
 Therein thy part.

FESTUS. Thine, Lord, the cause, the praise.

GOD. This contest we remit to man's last race
 And generation, that, by choice of good,
 Rejected sin, soul purity, preferred
 As dear to God whose breath is holiness,
 That fight, aforetime fought in each one's breast,
 But once for all fought now at large, may prove
 Heaven gives and makes cause common with all souls,
 For the good, militant. For the time enough.
 Guard-Angel, let this soul, thy charge, to earth
 Returned, fate's first-fruits cull. Nor go unwarned.
 Let him self satiate of all knowledge, learn
 The world's sage untruths ; yea, how idol gods,
 All alike false, into each other fallen,
 At last fall into nothing ; one alone,
 All time's most secret verity and overt,
 Vouched for by all ; to him not only known

By reason, and inspiration, but pure grace.
 Let sacred rites, deific called by those
 Seeking in vain 'mong many gods, the one
 Who knows none save himself, so aid that while
 Those aims, high, holy, for man's weal, he seeks,
 Reached to and realised in earth's harvest age ;
 These, scions of the seers of old, inflamed
 With love of guerdon due to worthiest work ;
 And gaining hiddenly their great effects,
 As nature hers, in silence and unseen ;
 They may his faithful aspirations make
 Accord with their decrees ; man's perfectness
 Concurrent with earth's tale of days, by us
 Assigned first. Thou, too, angel of the reed
 Of record, quick Cherubiel, of truths to me
 Transcriptive, trace from Heaven's original tongue
 Into this man's, of world-speech what to know
 Him most behoves, the sum of wisdom's lore.
 Apt volume found, and fitting shrine to hold
 Truth's treasures freely worded, take thou heed
 That Evil's plot, by us o'erruled, this man
 Of fate may view in every test to come,
 The infinite providence controlling life,
 Life hallowing, if to good trained ; and the curse
 Of coveted power the soul to intercept
 Upon its way, to God and judgment ; good
 Ruling, and in the end, good crowning all.
 Men know not, nor can know, the day, which, reached,
 Their kind's perfection, marches on fate's page
 With earth destroyed, peace crowned ; from birth of things
 An end forefixed, which so long while delayed
 By tyrannous superstitions, wars, and wrongs
 Of every dye, reduces to a day
 What might have been enjoyed a thousand years.
 Let not man therefore deem himself aggrieved
 By destiny ; but the day thy charge, elect
 Of universal man, shall, choosing power
 World wide, decide he most can serve his kind
 By ruling, and so rendering general choice
 Of peace infrangible ; so ensured as then
 Shall patiently appear, the day of days
 To thee will prove, Guard Angel, nor to thee,
 Angel of earth, less.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. I then may this man
 Accompany as of old.

GOD. Thou hadst need.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. O joy !

GOD. Him failing, thou mayest strengthen to all good ;
 Him sin-bound, check ; him sinning, see thou show,
 With the spirit who tempts, so prompt to avile him, hell ;
 And so with pains premonitory of proof
 His soul chastise ; that he the fines may feel,

Of obstinate fault and purposeful offence.
 Though warnings may have useless proved, fail not
 To meet this mortal equitably adjudged
 Hell's fiendly prison to pass through, he to bear,
 As through a burning tent an arrow shot
 Bears on its wingèd heel the scent of fire,
 Thereafter, speechless griefs ; for though by fate,
 Soul chartered to console mankind, and thence
 Hell's animate flames evading ; yet no day
 Shall pass without its retributive tear
 For sin conceived if not achieved ; and earth
 Revisiting through all lands, remorseful ; preach
 The spirit's thrice holy freedom, sought by him,
 Thrall of imperious passion for the hour,
 To invade, to desecrate ; (how many a time
 To be repented of) and the verity tell,
 Long lost to man, of justly apportioned doom
 In realms, whence self-recuperative, the soul
 May diffidently again seek to behold
 My face ; and rightliest balanced equity
 Prove by strict mercy administered, that the heart
 Of the broad world may gladden in its God.

SAINTS. So from all ill thou, Lord ! bring'st ever good :
 Be all things thus o'erruled to work thine ends
 Self-satisfactive ; Being's boundless good,
 And everlasting bliss made one with thine.

GOD. Know, all souls shall be judged ; commended all
 Rather to self-amendment ; and condemned
 None without end : those cradled through all streams
 Of time, all spheres : these by me chosen to prove
 To creature mind my sovereign freedom ; those
 By virtue's law adjudged, and natural light
 Of conscious right and wrong, the just, so taught
 Of heaven's eternal equity, proclaim
 In God and man one common righteousness,
 One sole ; man justified to God, by sense
 Of love's, truth's, piety's laws innate, obeyed ;
 Or violate, self-condemned ; and God, free choice
 By his own free will who gave, like cleared, to man.
 Thou, Beniel, who beheld'st the angelic fall
 Primal, and in this last, of Angel-world,
 With holiest love, wroughtst, earnest to retrieve
 To truth and good all who, for such soul gifts,
 Most harmed, most hated thee, go teach those same,
 Self-trammelled in sin's sequences, and now
 In hell imperilled, how to meet, how scape,
 Of every age and sphere.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Haste, soul-guard thou,
 The impending ruin of man's orb, long doomed,
 To o'ertake, and Time's slow step slip swiftly by,
 Make much of every moment, ere it pass.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Sire of all spirits celestial, and of earth,

We live but in the well-doing of thy will.
 Thrice holy Lord, predestinator of all
 Thy creatures' lives and duties, thy behests
 I joy to obey, and visit Hell's blind world
 And donjon orb of judgment, at thy word
 Whose thought is destiny, and justest law.

GOD. Let him not doubt of liberty there, nor deem
 Here only, angels free. All spirits live
 In order's law, the law of sequent times,
 Passed, present, and to be ; which, operant not,
 The world, nor aught that is, were what it is ;
 Law, which sane soul could no more hate, disown,
 Evade, or seek to annul, than it could blot
 Its being from God's knowledge. Learn, too, this ;
 Too long hath earth misdeemed of hell. It is just
 Since reason's self is foiled in her own words,
 By bigots caught, and twisted as they fell,
 The truth were yet unveiled. This soul's offence,
 Thought only, fit occasion gives to learn,
 And thence, like apt, for him to announce to man,
 Hell's predetermined scope, its temporal use,
 Its equity, and its uneternal end.
 Him, angels, free through fiend-world ; and while there,
 Its nature marked, and true contrition's fruits,
 Bid him, to man returned, throughout all lands,
 The justifying truth, so learned, proclaim ;
 My name revindicate from the evil charge,
 Sad misconceit, of sin's perpetuator,
 And infinite torturer of soul finite, made
 For ends far other : Heaven's remission, there
 Even, to be earned by just remorse ; return
 To truer life, with law concordant ; hate
 Of good and order, sin being ; life untrue.

FESTUS. O angel ! let me welcome thee.

GUARDIAN ANGEL.

Nay, name me,

For by thy lips invoked at morn and eve,
 My name I love.

FESTUS. Return we now ?

GUARDIAN ANGEL.

Return.

FESTUS. How vast it seems, this deep abyss of space
 World-studded, 'neath our feet.

GUARDIAN ANGEL.

Stars stranger still,
 Nobler than those late visited we may find.
 Wilt sojourn for a time among these spheres,
 And test their natures ?

FESTUS.

Gladly.

GUARDIAN ANGEL.

Seek we then,
 All rareness and variety these bright globes
 Can offer ere we reach thine orb. Descend.
 Now is the age of worlds. Another comes.

GOD. This weigh thou, mortal, thoughtful. Ere thou findest
 Again thy star, lo ! Ouriel of the Sun

Hath it in charge to show thee, of the passed
 The spirit's sacred liberty ; and prove,
 As, in that primest privilege of God's soul,
 Thou hast thyself demeaned, so care thou most
 Not to infract another's right, or dread
 Just vengeance and severe, on wilful wrong.
 Thou, angel, this ;—the wonders of all worlds,
 While thus unfolded to the sateless eye
 His dateless passed, and all himself, he cons ;
 And how the spirit from age to age may fall
 From birth-star down to death-star through all sphere ;
 Show him how yet, by rational rites, by life,
 Sweet, holy, penitent for the passed ; by firm
 And pure aspirings for the future, soul
 Eternal union with its Lord may win.
 For, know all Angels, I have so made man,
 That his original excellence shall defeat
 All he hath ill ; his inborn goodness, sin
 So outweigh finally, his soul shall live
 By royal right of virtue in itself
 Immortal, and here reign with us in heaven.
 Nor be ye astound that Evil, by me permit,
 By me commissioned, to himself unknown,
 Life, more than one imperishable, to loose
 From body ; and who so acting deems himself
 But by his own vain ends, inspired, should feel
 False impulse to triumph ; all souls, be sure,
 Have their appointed season, and just reward.
 One law there is ye angels know, to all
 Intelligences, alike responsible made
 Through starry space, through spheres probational ; spheres
 Disciplinant ; for breach of law divine,
 Man's good which underlies in all the worlds,
 Confession of Heaven's code as just ; and fines
 Depurative, self-fixed for trespass, (priced
 By death's enlightening judgment in such orbs
 As death, life's mightiest change, affects ; in those
 Death haunts not, by dis severance from God's love,)
 For ill, if e'er, to other selfishly
 Done or devised, while lasts to wronged soul
 Or wronger, memory of the inflicted wrong,
 Lest passion or more treacherous fault revived,
 The like offence perpetuate each in turn,
 Retaliative for ever ; ill so shown
 Attempered 'mid yon orbs sin-cleansing, where
 Justice nor claims, nor equity tasks enjoins,
 Of restitutive service feasible not ;
 But good-will more than equal, for all time,
 With the ill passed, adds beneficent acts ; the souls
 Meanwhile of both, forgiver and forgiven,
 In high and ever heavenward harmony
 Progressive, each, with variant grades of good,

The other bettering, the whole righteous law
 Of practical penitence for offence, to improve
 In active virtue, this ; and thus fulfilled.
 Know too all thoughts just holy, high, the mind's
 Divine ideals, which the aspiring soul
 Longs, and would joy to verify, are, here,
 Or, in surrounding spheres, the aptest sites
 For such celestial seed, implanted, nursed,
 And to full fruitage brought ; and they who bear,
 Beget, or guest such thoughts in these high spheres,
 Their starry destinies enjoy, or change
 For that alone they better love, or feel
 They can make others happier by.

ANGELS.

Laws, Lord !

We live by, and do worship thee, in them,
 Like patent, all comprising, operative,
 Throughout Heaven's moral commonweath, as those
 Through space unseen, yet strong, that soul its own
 Redemption earns, and carries in itself,
 Wrought under thee, O God ! not more life's lord
 Thou, than soul's confessor, who dost absolve
 By righteousness divine, which all things weighs
 Justly, earth's self-caused ills, man's mark missings,
 Life's errors ; and, dues equitably repaid ;
 And, heart amendment proved, of guilt wilt clear
 All nature, made defectible, and its best
 Aspired to, sought and wrought, at last wilt bless.
 Behold, God maketh earth and soul anew ;
 The one like heaven, the other like himself ;
 So shall the new Creation come at once ;
 Sin, the dead branch upon the tree of life,
 Shall be cut off for ever, and all soul
 Concluded in his boundless amnesty.

GOD. Nor err ye, nor be ignorant as to sin.
 To bridge the intransmeable void that gaps
 'Tween thought and act, alike free, instant that,
 This, fixed for aye, were both to annul ; were right
 And wrong, and good with evil, to confound.
 Ill done, is treatable but one only way ;
 It must be rectified ; not execute,
 See it by conscience self condemned, soul roused,
 Soul saved. Yet cognizant of the law it half
 Infringed, divinely operant, justly smote
 With foresight realized of age-long remorse,
 And fiery wrath indignant, of all Heaven.

ANGELS. Even as in one, so be it, Lord, in all ;
 Be it ever as thou, Lord ! wilt, Thy word is fate.
 O ! haste, ye times, when universal man
 All narrower creeds abandoned, in one faith,
 Thee sole shall worship rationally, the eterne,
 The personal infinite, the All-one, who makes,
 Sustains, all things comprises, and all souls,

Self purified, by the truth made free, redeems.

ARCHANGEL. All are but particles of one divine
And never can in holy gladness shine
Till builded all into one common shrine
Which God shall make His temple. As the woe
Each human heart on earth doth undergo,
Shall be the calm immeasurable flow
Of joy, united man in Heaven shall know.

XXV.

Divine humanity, 'twixt the world and God,
Of intermediate essence in all spheres,
Inseminate by the Maker, for their good,
Angelic, not than human less, exists
In both imperfect, differing in degree,
In each perfectible; and if here to die,
Be to depart to other spheres less harsh,
Less rudimentary than our own; as faith
Refined and rationalized persuades, and proof
Here absolute shews; and if from other worlds,
By Heaven's all-knowing soul e'er sent where most
Needed for purity, force or ampler life,
More varied culture; higher grace, or growth,
Expanse of natural powers, or kindlier mien
And bearing of Humanity towards itself,
And all creation's lowlier ranks; enough
Is graspable by the finite spirit, of God's
All present governance, reason to convince
He all things made for their commutual good,
And in their joy His own to realize.

The Martian Sphere. FESTUS, GUARDIAN ANGEL, LUCIFER.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Regained the sun's bright precincts, rest we
here.

Almost thou mayst believe thyself at home.
Another star-step down our steep descent,
And we are there.

FESTUS. See here, fire, water, snow :
These truly are family features of a sphere
Akin to earth.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Akin, but not too well
Affected; say the star-seers of all time;
Dread sign of strife and woe; by Pagan faith
To the war-god dedicate. Twin moonlets, bright
And crescent, one; one, wan and waning, wait
Close on his thunderous tread, as who should bear
His godship's spear and shield; and heaven's steep hill
Ascending, cheer him on his reddening way,
Hot with reflected flames. But lo! the arch fiend,
Come so far forth to welcome thy return,
Doubtless,

FESTUS. He intercepts, but not disputes,
Our path.

LUCIFER. Impatience brought me here. I feared
Thou hadst been lost, or dissipated in air,
As meteor, may be. But now, fear, avaunt !
Like some explorer of far isles, returned
Homewards, in spoil of all the elements,
Rich, in tree-corallery and pendent pearl,
And odorous woods and gums, and jewelled gold ;
Thou comest with mindful stores of starlife rife,
And legends stretching back to time's pale dawn.
We wait to join thee earthwards.

FESTUS. Be it so.

Why see we not the angel of this orb ?

LUCIFER. Though much my friend he is this hour away ;
He knows where war most thrives ; so him I made
My deputy for the nonce.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. He might have learned
If here, how near to a total end all war,
In any sphere.

FESTUS. How old this thought of war ;
Indigenous in the elements, nay, in Heaven.
These very heavens, how old, whose starry forms
Of ancient legend sired, still keeping shape
Traditionary, from hence seen, largelier loom,
Answering their names more pertinently. See there,
Sirius, bright measurer of the heroic years,
Primaeval ; and, more vast than viewed from earth,
The huge Orion, standing, arm uplift,
(As we thee, rebel Evil of the world,
Sublimely impious, threatening so God's throne,
Might image,) and his mighty mace on high
Whirling, conceive, all trace of some bright star
Lost from a glorious seat, for ages held,
Dropping its fruit of many a shining orb
Crushed, shattered, down the abyss.

LUCIFER. Nay, rather, say
An image of the Almighty error, man,
Banished and banned to heaven, by a weak world
Which makes the minds it cannot master, gods.

FESTUS. Orion ! belted giant of the skies,
Whose head is lost in heights of heaven ; whose belt,
Embossed with kingly stars, thee mightiest shows,
And first 'mongst half gods ; they, sage seers of Eld,
Who nationalized the skies, and, wondrous men,
Ere history graved her slab, or fame crowned song,
Forestalling heaven by ages, gave all stars
To the spirits of the good and brave, once earth's,
Believed thou wast a giant, bulked of worlds ;
Nor wholly ill believed ; if thus they typed
The immortal mind ; for it hath starlike beauty,
And world-like might, and is as high above

The things it scorns ; and though He gave it earth,
And heaven, and arms to win them both, will war
Vainly with God, nor seek His gifts to earn.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. To affix fictitious meanings to conceits
Dream-limned, and fabled acts, hath e'er been man's.

FESTUS. Yea, and if such their fateful prescience, thou

Brave star, great victim of mean victors, once
Beguiled by wiles thou wouldst not stoop to meet,
Of poison impested wine, and a drunken sleep,
Like to high noon in the midst of all his might ;
And unremembering of all good, one hour,
Allegiance to pure laws, and just renown,
Thou, on the brink of immortality
Won worthily, didst abjure thy claim, and sin
Through forceful passion, foullier than all seas,
Thou walkest o'er, nor wet'st thy glittering feet,
The deep dominions of thine ocean-sire,
Could cleanse ; and loosedst so, thine inborn light,
By rude revenge of kings, who hate the great,
Thou fearedst not to reseek Heaven's light supreme,
Renovative ; and upstanding towards the sun,
Didst gain again thine eyes. So the great king,
The world, the tyrant we elect, in vain
Puts out the eyes of mind ; mind looks to God,
And reaps once more its light. And now thy soul,
O flood-borne king, informs yon hundred stars,
As mine my limbs. Well, 'tis a noble end.
What now to thee be mortal maid, or goddess ?
Look ; she who fled thee once, now loves, and longs
To clasp thee to her cold and beamy breast.
Pine, moon ; thou art as far below him, now
As once she was above thee, thou of the world-belt.
Who called thee hers, and knew thee demi-god,
Died of her boast, and lies in her own dust ;
And she who loved thee, the young blushy Morning,
The mighty, the invincible maid of light,
Who caught thee in her arms, and bore thee off,
Far o'er the lashing seas to a lonely isle,
Where she might pleasure longer and in secret,
That love undid thee ; and it is so now,
Whether the beauty seek, or flee, or have,
'Tis a like ill ; this beauty, doubly mortal.
What though death-fanged by creeping things thou scorn'd'st ;
Or, that the moon with madness slew thee there ;
Let us believe 'twas yet within the arms
Which loved thee, even in the stroke of death ;
And that there snapped the lightning link of life.
Kill, but not conquer man nor mind, may gods.
Wherefore, revenge, thou who so much hast borne,
From man's deceit, and treachery of false gods,
And woman's love, and mean contempt of kings,
Out with the sword ; the world will run before thee.

Thou with the treble strain of godhood in thee,
March ! there is nought to hinder thee in heaven,

LUCIFER. Nor us in air. But doubt not he will march,
When word to march is given. From head to foot,
Your giant shall collapse. His sword, his mace,
Staff, kingly girdle, and the radiant sheath
Lit inly with dim nebulous lights, shall join
All discreate things. Yon foot that spurned the main,
Shall heel the void. Those stern and stormy stars,
On his broad shoulders blazoned, that o'er fleets
Glared preaccepted ruin, and to all crews
Tempestuous death, shall shine no more, but seek
A sudden nothingness. Would I might end
Like wholly and for ever.

FESTUS. Hope not that :
Hope aught else better, Spirit !

LUCIFER. No more ! What else
Of marvellous thou hast seen I'll doubtless learn
Some later day.

FESTUS. It is all one miracle,
The world I live in, and the life I breathe.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. 'Twere well the militant spirit who under
God,

This spherelet guides, misdeemed of old by earth's
Lost ages, lord of battles, should have heard
The heavenly word, seal up war's blood-writ roll.

LUCIFER. He'll hear it soon enough.

FESTUS. What mean those clouds
Explosive seeming, close to earth, that blotch,
Gore-dyed, her face ?

GUARDIAN ANGEL. War, war, continuous war ;
Preparatory, or suffering from, our earth,
Self desecrative of habit, breeds.

FESTUS. Enough ;
A spirit is abroad that act to annul ;
That self-doom to undoom.

LUCIFER. 'Tis the sole way
I know to ensure the end of earth. Give peace ;
She'll die for want of violent deaths. But see,
Quite apt to our discourse, our angel guide,
Good Martiel, faithful to his orb, nor yet
So very long away, wars now are brief,
If not less frequent ; 'companied by a troop
Of spirits as though in earth-life bred.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Too true.
Such have I oft seen rush from battle fields,
Like storm-clouds, nor, till now, knew whither. Hail,
Angel, be welcome home.

MARTIEL. Be welcome, you
Celestial spirits, or earthly ; one I see,
Plainly, of earth.

LUCIFER. Another, thou wouldst say,

As plainly,—well, I grant it, more or less ;
I am quite ubiquitous.

FESTUS. How, and wherefore here
It haps we meet, hear briefly, angel friend.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. And you, ye stranger souls, all dumb, here
rest,

And, teachable, hearken a brother spirit, of man,
Forethoughtful of these outer spheres, on whose
Thresholds, as now on this, ye some day stand,
His visits among them tell ; which so may prove
To you no detriment, but the inexpert
Arm with forecast of spiritual change, once missed
By them on earth, but verified to be
In every spirit sustained, ere holy peace
Accept the adventurous hand.

FESTUS. They speak not, these.

MARTIEL. Nor marvel not their voice is but a ghost,
Whose whisper rather strikes the heart than ear.
The astounding step from death, to life renewed,
Still holds them mute ; but they will yet bless God.

FESTUS. Not now I tell of those resplendent spheres
First passed through nigh to Heaven, whence self-dismissed
Thy going, Lucifer, mine forewent ; and thence,
Through spatial tracts, to man or angel known
Never before, glide ; I and mine, dear guard ;
But only of those hard by, of solar strain,
And outer globelets of our system ; hear
What therefore I of late have seen, where been.
All things permitted, or enjoined of God,
By us enjoyed, accomplished, knowing all
Material spheres made but as fields to test
The erring, yet refinable spirit ; God's act
It is, which, unknown, tries through time, the soul's
Fidelity, asks its free response ; our course
Through space, star-peopled, checked by many a world,
Of bright enchantments, singing as they sped,
We oft delayed to search their wonders wild,
Stranger than e'er of wizard wrought, or feigned
By wild romancer in his lures, till reached,
These twelvefold mansion-spheres perfective ; first,
Entering as nature needs, the outmost round
Of solar generation, all unnamed,
Where bide, in merit and misdeed like poised,
Those souls indifferently on earth, self-steered,
Self-compassed, who nor hit the white, nor miss
The targe ; the crowd whose deeds were good enough,
Examples blameless, but who sought not truth,
The insuperable and all-sufficing truth ;
Their spiritual ingrowth stinting thus ; and here,
Who wise to teach, by deeds, denied their faith,
Both ardent now to teach the true, and join
With it all good in act consistent, seek

Souls such as those in life they failed to serve,
And oft-times absent upon earth ; and load
With treblest gifts, with benefits thousandfold
To bless whom they had wronged ; so pure the sense
Of divine retribution to the soul
Death hath enskied ; so plain. Thence, sunward still,
To a vast crystalline orb, where innocent sprites
And amiable, who God in life adored
Lukewarmly ; kept but formally His law,
Loved only cursorily their race, nor lacked
Of good life aught save credence in its worth ;
Enlightened now from their great life-fount, draw
In earnest commune joy unhopèd, unthought,
Undreamed of raptures in imparting good.
Anon to satellite orbs, where gentlest shades,
Of ill incapable only seeming, learned,
In more robust activity, to achieve
For others worthier weal than aught they deemed
Their own strength capable of ; to themselves peace.
To all varieties known, of deathless race,
As though on separate special mission bound,
Urged by desire insatiable to know
These star-dwellers of ampler skies, we passed
Through darknesses ethereal, lampèd with gleams
Of servant meteors, waved by friendliest hands,
Commanded to that end, to a mightier star,
Where sultans of the fore-flood age, allies
Of godly realms, but peccant in themselves,
And baser royalties of succedent times,
To purify from sin their gold-bound brows,
Have opposite places changed with those they held
Their slaves on earth ; these, wistful now of truth
Their despot drudge control to worthiest tasks,
Self evident for the general good, ordained
Of God, who all, the least as greatest, rules.
The orb of virtues this, glowing, self-lit
With spiritual excellences, like jewels mined
By humblest labour, each one for himself,
But in the crowned insignia of God's saints,
Unalterably the best for others' use.
Here, jubilant choirs of righteous souls convene,
This teaching, that one taught ; and all of Heaven.
Here, meditation sums God's laws ; the code
Spatial, that binds life's universal realm,
Not to be broken, ne'er evaded : here,
And all-where, one same equity. This quit,
Mine angel guard, his wings across his breast
Folding, me closely clasped ; and as a star ;
From the immoveable loosed, in one bright line
Of light continuous, darts, till these calm plains
Of roseate snow sighted, he, opening wide
His gradual wings, as her eye wonder, (viewed

Some new made world, where lately all was void)
Let fall his foot, mine following, where we stand.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Well may one wonder who hath seen, and more
Who hath not seen, worlds made or unmade ; for know,
God alway is creating ; earth by earth,
And heaven with heaven concentric ; and the whole
Framed, into being all spirits, all angels, breathes.
And as some youthful Mage, full oft in tale
Pictured of arrant wizardry, from night
Calling the first time to him powers he knows not,
Nor how the spirits, huge, welkin-winged, that throng
To kiss the evocative hand, may show ;
So God ; but so, unlike ; ancient, ere time
Existed ; He, all knowing, passed, to come ;
Wistful of all capacities of all things ;
All being, root and ramage, to his eye
Precognizant, ever clear ; His own vast thoughts
Evokes, all generative, and gives them life,
Life spherul, spiritual life. He now, by name
The elements calls, which, each one in its place,
And in its turn, obedient comes to the word
Omnific, of the infinite soul ; now, orbs
From inorganic shapelessness, bids forth,
Revolving, radiative, whose glowing globes,
In æther cooled, their eddying course contract
In less exorbitant bounds ; and lull to rest
Their flaming hearts within them ; now conceives
In hi. wide counselling mind, an order blessed
Of angelhood ; and lo ! firmaments over abound
With the new hierarchy.

FESTUS. What mean yon souls,
Inquisitive as they seem of every breath
They breathe ; though more æthereal than the exhaled
Filmlet of birdling's bill, on wintry morn ?
I, on behalf of those even since arrived,
Not less than mine own curiousness, would ask
Of thee, kind sphere interpreter, for time
All further search of mine forbids, what aim
The various acts of these so various groups,
Busied, we see, with every root of life,
And inquest so profound, as seems, of all
They live by, and upon, regard ; and thence,
Upon what after upward shelving plane
Such life, progressive here, wends, and its end.

MARTIEL. Where'er is man, he everywhere, behold
There too delusion. In each rudiment
Of natural world-life he perfection seeks,
Not finds ; the search yet bettering him ; here, see
Who dig the earth for bubbles, wring the cloud
Of sunset for its rubied gold ; who strain
The snow to win its whiteness, and the lake
Moonlit, will cradle oft, for shadowy bars

Of argent ore. In all worlds man's pursuits
 Are like in spirit, if bodily diverse,
 Here, some devote to public good will serve
 Themselves the last ; self being in itself
 Not culpable, but as illy placed or used.
 Who looks up Heavenward, in what lawful quest
 Soe'er, the gaze attracts of angels ; these
 His spirit's proper force, and strength of will
 Persistent, which through mountains thrills, and finds
 No durable check to its adamantine neb,
 Well-weighed, instruct, oft help. So here, we see
 The death-proof soul, impatient now of wrong,
 As reckless once of right, makes good his hours
 Once in vain idlesse waste, mean aims, base arts ;
 And raised o'er tyrant trivialties of sect,
 Custom and habit, modish servitudes,
 And of transparent honesty proud, now learns
 All sensuous motives, such as ruled too much
 His course on earth, to hate ; to abhor the thirst
 For carnage, and the lust for city, or, soil,
 Conterminous this, that neighbouring, not his own,
 For ever ; the sole strife become, with such,
 Is, who shall better other most, most load
 With boons of peace ? Life-lovers these, who haste
 To expiate every needless death on earth,
 By them caused wantonly, and now awaked
 To righteous sense of their own wrongfulness,
 With compensative care, life's every kind
 Tend round them, like, yet different ; to abjure,
 With passionate tears of joy their misbeliefs ;
 Misdeeds ; and, save 'gainst evil, shun all strife,
 Somewhile to be fordone. The end of all,
 When spiritual betterment shews full aptness here,
 To be trans-sphered, earth's globe expert, passed by,
 The westering star thou knowest, the Hesperian orb,
 Admits the spirit aggrandized and made pure,
 Joy positive to partake.

FESTUS.

With rest refreshed,
 And how much who can say, save one who feels,
 The cup of sleep drained to its last sweet lees,
 Awaked to ends more thoughtful ; or, as might
 Of old have felt the mythical islet king,
 Lord of the vengeful bow, when he, footswollen
 With travel, many a steep and jagged brow
 O'ertopped, his bath takes at the observant hands
 Of nursing Night farshining, who had erst
 Cherished his youth, and all his venturous life's
 Toilful beneficence known ; his heart the while
 For weightier works ennerved, and graver acts.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. My guidance as from first prepared, accept.

LUCIFER. Why now resumed thy charge ?

GUARDIAN ANGEL.

By God replaced,

Whose is all place.

LUCIFER. But why ; the All-present One,
As easily as an angel or a saint
Invoked, nor, called, less like to aid, being nigh
Ever, to all, I know not.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Thou mayst learn,
Sometime, if patient.

LUCIFER. Oh ! if not till then,
That story may, perchance, have lost its charm.
Him therefore let impart to whom he wills,
And it concerns, his reason. But for ourselves,
Not patient only, cautious must we be.
False spirits I hear are much about ; and some
No little in vogue. Have I not heard invoked
In splendid privacy with prayer untongued,
Joined hands, and incense improvised in air,
The astral ghost irradiate with soft light
Intelligible, not sensible ; seen him come
Self shapening into vision ('gainst all law
Of metaphysic) mage, meanwhile, or maid,
Still resolute to wring forth the hidden spell
Shall urge indifferent beauty lovewards ; snatch
Life's revocative charm, or seek the oath
Obligant which the star-bound spirit shall stay
Upon that unwinged way no eaglet knows,
Nor morn's, nor evening's golden parallels
Illume ; no lengths, nor latitudes of light ;
No angel blabs ; the session with a seal
Of mutual grace closed, sweeter from some lips
Than nectarous drop, pellucid, self-distilled
From the hearts of flowers ; so cautious must we be.

FESTUS. Oh, we'll be very cautious, on my word.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Let then that evil spirit depart.

FESTUS. Make not

Thy stay, if elsewhere called, depend on ours,
Who linger here, e'er wistful of new sights.

LUCIFER. It is well, I go.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Thou go'st ; 'tis well.

LUCIFER. Our paths

Bifurcate here.

FESTUS. So, we shall meet again.

LUCIFER. Fear not ; quite soon.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. For earth's great commonweal,
And wealth of good, would it were not so.

LUCIFER. Ha !

I overheard that. There's a wormy spoke
In that same wheel of good, rots the whole tyre,
Or much I err.

FESTUS. Here wait we yet awhile.

XXVI.

Time's lapse who notes mid flights like this? Once more
 In merry medley mixed, youth's liberal mirth,
 Disport we; now the natural luxuries taste
 Of love, trust, amity, un-Circean cups
 Which change to loftier life, by virtuous charms,
 The spirit, of joy enchanted; still unmasked
 Worldwards, in frivolous pleasures. These, one hour,
 Our world-seer joins, soul solemnized, to renounce:
 And as of old, when in some sainted shrine,
 By secular license, antic play perturbed
 Time and again, the dim roofed vastnesses,
 And dominant sanctities of the place, but passed
 Harmless and soon; the hallowed solitude
 Leaving, when gone, more grave; so here, meanwhile,
 Deserted long, it may be, the only love
 Life sanctifying; let wit adorn, or grace
 Charm, as they may; too sensitive shows, to abide
 Constant estrangement, and aye failing faith.

Summer-house, and Pleasure-grounds; Groves; Walks; Fountains.

MARIAN, HELEN, EDWARD, CHARLES, SOPHIA, and Others.

EDWARD. Again we meet in this fair scene;

Ah! might we be but ever young.

HARRY. We pray thee, Helen, be again our queen,

HELEN. I prithee hold thy tongue.

A royal revolution 'twere indeed

That I should twice reign, and myself succeed.

CHARLES. No nay, no nay! it must be so;

Permit me.

HELEN. Well, there needs no show

Of more reluctance than I feel;

Both kings and queens must court the commonweal.

HARRY. A bumper at meeting, a bumper at parting;

As many you like be between;

But we will have a right ruddy brimmer at starting;

A health to our beautiful queen.

Long long may she reign in our hearts and right arms,

And her all but omnipotence last;

She shall fear nothing rougher than love's light alarms;

There is nought in the coming can darken her charms;

There is nought can eclipse in the past.

A brimmer at sitting, a brimmer at starting.

As many you like be between;

But we will have a right ruddy bumper at parting,

A health to our beautiful queen.

Oh! while beauty shall live in the form of the fair,

And love in the heart of the brave,

The queen of our souls, she shall never despair,

For our hearts we would drain, and our deaths we would dare.

To avenge whom we love, or to save.

HELEN. Born to exert the powers of my state,
Charles, I have named thee poet-laureate.

HARRY. Kiss hands upon appointment.

CHARLES.

Sovereign fair !

Behold thy grateful servant.

HELEN.

Sit thou there,

In all but full equality with me ;

Love rules the heart, and the mind poesie :

In youth at least, and when in hours like this,

The rule is pleasure, the exception bliss.

LAURENCE. But where is Festus ?

HELEN.

'Tis to him we owe

The repetition of this scene of joy.

He bids me say he loves ye all ye know,

But deems his presence less attraction than annoy.

Whatever ye can name, and I command,

Is by his bidding welcome thus to all ;

But pardon craves ; high quests he hath in hand,

Which wait not on his own nor pleasure's call.

And though to me his presence be a power,

His every word with love's bright magic rife,

Yet he—nor him from that height would I lower—

Lives in the upper hemisphere of life ;

Where angel thoughts and spiritual orbs

Roll in the majesty of mind profound ;

Where Truth's bright disk, all doubt spots dark absorbs,

And inspiration's lightning beams abound.

Whether he e'er return to scenes like this,

I know not—much I question—but can trace

The tone, methinks, of that sad soul of his

Roll ever deepening down an endless bass,

Like an abyss of thunder. But, away !

These tears mine eyes have haunted all the day ;

Now they are vanished. Let us change, I pray,

The matter of our converse.

SOPHIA.

Ay, be gay !

HELEN. Come, we will consecrate the passing hour,

With songs of love, and lays of beauty's power ;

For when the tale of Time hath told

A thousand thousand years,

His purple pinions starred with gold,

Wherewith he doth the world enfold,

Will still be stained with dust, and tears ;

And still life's sole brief Paradise, in sooth,

Be love and beauty in the hour of youth.

A song, a dance, one cup to beauty's name ;

Music, a jest, or pleasant tale in rhyme ;

Sufficient these, with mirth and gentle game,

Alternate with repose, to fill our time.

And first, a dance ! for earth and heaven

Are both to choral influence given.

All things their nature that fulfil,
 In harmlessness and joy, his will
 Worship and do ; though dumb and still ;
 For noteless, countless are the ways
 Of nature practising his praise ;
 And dancing hath a sacred birth
 Like all the happiest customs of the earth.

CHARLES. The sun in the centre turns solemnly round,
 And the pale god of shades, the conductor of souls,
 Seems to warm as he circles the glory profound,
 Where the goddess of beauty all beamingly rolls ;
 While earth, with her sister, floats brilliantly by,
 Her heart towards the sun, and her love in her eye.
 Then Mars, like a warrior gloomy and red,
 Impetuous wheels, ever glancing at one ;
 While nine sister goddesses mazily tread,
 In the midst of a nonade each heavenly head,
 The bright fields of air which encircle the sun ;
 And Jove the majestic, serene in his might,
 Sweeps cloudy and thunderous aye to the light.
 Then Saturn, old grey-bearded emblem of time,
 Comes slowly and chilly to join with the rest ;
 And Ouranus next with young Eros sublime,
 Move slowly as though they partook with the blest ;
 And each, his bright bevy of servitors round,
 Complete the vast figure with harmony crowned.

HELEN. This, Sir, is your inaugural ode ?

CHARLES. If you, fair lady, think it so.
 Your word imposes the sole code
 Of truth, law, or justice, we may know.

HELEN. Then my authority is absolute.

EDWARD. As truth's my liege.

HELEN. We'll soon see if it suit
 So like the stars which circle through the skies,
 As Charles hath sung,
 Let us too dance with choral harmonies,
 Ourselves among.

MARIAN (*apart*). Again that name hath knelled upon mine ear,
 Though I have never voiced it. 'Tis to me
 Too deeply, yea unutterably dear.
 How warmly too she loves him ! Let it be.
 Who most enjoy the light may best endure,
 When come, the darkness ; as it now is here.
 Whatever his, may my troth-plight keep sure !
 I have turned to thee, moon, from the glance
 That in triumphing coldness was given ;
 And rejoiced, as I viewed thee all lonely advance,
 There was something was lonely in heaven.
 I have turned to thee, moon, as I lay
 In thy silent and saddening brightness ;
 And rejoiced, as high heaven went shining away,

That the heart had its desolate lightness.
 I have turned to thee, moon, from my love,
 And from all that once blessed me, in sadness;
 And can marvel no more that, abandoned above,
 Thou should'st lend thy bright face to make madness.
 I have turned to thee, moon, from my heart,
 That in love hath long laboured and sorrowed;
 And have hoped it might mix, as I watched thee depart,
 Like thyself, with the morn which had morrowed.

LAURENCE. Can I behold the lady of my love
 Mourning alone, from pleasure all apart?
 Again I seek thee, though it be to hear
 The sentence of destruction to my heart.
 Yet if it be so, still one moment stay;
 For so it haps whene'er I think of thee,
 So blent is thought with love's anxiety,
 My spirit doth invariably pray.

Any blessing God can give
 Never be withheld from thee;
 Nor will I desire to live
 If that prayer be lost to me;
 Else I were unworthy thee.
 If e'er my hand doth aught of good
 I do it in thy name;
 For well I know thy kind heart would,
 If with me, bid the same.
 All mirth I check, for well I know
 It is not meet for me;
 No smile shall ever light this brow,
 Nor ought, away from thee.

MARIAN. I thank thee, Laurence, and believe;
 But this is all I can for thee,
 Save grieve that thou should'st vainly grieve,
 I to another am as thou to me;
 In this strange passion which pain sanctifies;
 This folly sorrow makes sublime and wise.

LAURENCE. Oh! there is nothing in this world of ours
 So sad to see,
 As the dark worm which dwells wherever flowers
 Our destiny;
 Eating the heart out of youth's budding hours
 Of glee.
 Not oft in sunny beds, nor sheltered bowers,
 Life's lot is cast;
 But chiefly lost in shade, and chilled by showers,
 Or the rude blast;
 Till all its delicate and wholesome powers
 Are past.
 And this then is the end of all the bliss
 Which love and beauty offered, and my soul
 Made certain of in natural triumph; this

The heritage of life ; and this, love's goal.

MARIAN. Peace ! there is one I name not, came not here
Partly because of me. But think'st thou I
Came to indulge a wretched vanity
With thee, or pry into another's sphere ?
With whom I grieve too ; which is more unblest,
Whose love is shunned or sought, let time attest !

LUCY. In his thou lovest we see thy heart,
Engrossed exists but as a part
Of one essential ; and there be
Who deem not that too wise in thee ;
But as some unwary serpent who her soul's
Pride hath paid down for sweet sounds, and unrolls,
Or intertwines, her body's shining rings,
At his mere will who, touched the silver keys
Of ivory flutelet, opes and seals joy's springs
Within her ; gently irritates at ease,
Or soothes ; but charms her, wheresoe'er he please ;
Until, translated for obedient skill,
Into his breast she, nestling there, lies still,
Pleased, nigh to death, with such dear harmonies ;—
So we, more free, thy love confess
Hath more of faith than hopefulness.

MARIAN. It may be ; mine it is, no less.

HELEN. And now, for pastime, some one tell a tale ;
Come, an adventure, Charles.

CHARLES. Oh, pray dispense
With my devoirs this time. I fain would try
If any wit be in the company ;
By observation, not experience,
Of course I judge : for of my own
The world and I are cognizant alone.

EMMA. Fatigued, no doubt, with over-admiration
Of your sweet self.

HELEN. Well, all then, in rotation.

WALTER. Now I know a delicious tale
Will suit you, Carrie, to a T.

CAROLINE. Do tell me then, and I'll believe
It more than truth, if need should be.

WALTER. Well ; Love is the child of bliss and woe ;
So, from his parents dear,
One eye is blinded with a smile,
One drowned in a tear.

And on one lip there drops a kiss,
Like honey from the wild woodbine ;
And that's the lip he had from bliss—
And that's the lip I will have mine ;
But on the other hangs a lie,
And that—but that's 'tween you and I.

CAROLINE. How very odd !

WALTER. Why, it's a fact,
And therefore needs no illustration ;

But if you think its principle abstract
It is easily shown in operation.

CAROLINE. Oh dear ! no, no ! I'll vow it's true,
Rather than have it proved by you.

LUCY. How aught than truth can e'er be truer,
Is news than e'en the newest newer.

EDWARD. Who thinks to sever life's delights
From happiest duty, woe invites ;
A fact which minstrels of all times

Have sanctioned, listen ! in their rhymes :

LUCY (*sings*).

As I stood by the lakelet of love, to my view,
Mid the moon's fairy glow, shone a soul-charming scene ;
The clouds were all silver, the skies were all blue,
And the shores were all waving with woodlands of green.
In a boat-shell of pearl sailed a maid and a youth,
And the song that she sang sounded sweeter than truth ;
But the youth sat all silent ; and soon to my sight,
They sped through the gathering shadows of night.

While I watched them departing, the waves seemed to sigh,
And the faintest of halos encircled the moon ;
And though love-light the gale, ever feigning to die,
There were signs of a change coming sudden and soon.
But the skies were still beaming, the stars were still bright,
And the lovers still steering their course of delight,
When the sound of the song on mine ear died away,
And the seal of sweet silence concluded the day.

When the sun to its woes first awakened the world,
What a scene ! the tall forests lay prostrate and bare ;
While the love-freighted bark into fragments was hurled,
And the youth and the maiden, alas ! they were—where ?
'Gainst the tempest that raged they had struggled in vain ;
And the lake rolling wroth as the storm-stricken main ;
Then the voice that was silent had shrieked round the shore ;
And the song that seemed sweeter than truth was no more.

WILLIAM. With poets everything must deathless be ;
Now, it's the passingness of things that gives
Their most exciting charm to me ;
Life has less beauty if it ever lives.

All loveliest things pass soonest ; clouds and flowers,
Rainbows, heart-kindling glances, the sweet smile,
Because brief, we admire, or make them ours ;
But we should slight them lived they longer while.

CHARLES. It is sweet to dream we are blessed at last with her
Who first made rapture in our bosom stir ;
Whose heart was fiction's home, while pure romance
Came purer from her lips ; or was't, perchance,
Her soul was music's shrine, whence with skilled key,
Each clear delicious tone the world of sound
Owns, as akin to airs celestial, she
At will drew forth, and radiated around ?
Though fairer, kinder since we may have known,
That first most innocent vision sits her throne ;
Still in our sleep plays o'er young passion's part ;

As pleasure's ghost still haunts the ruined heart ;
 Where lie the buried loves of younger years,
 Whose rites and requiems are as sighs and tears.
 Sleep on, ye living dead, in day, nor rise,
 But in night's shadowy shapes and dreamy eyes.
 Then, fade not, stir not till the imagined scene,
 Brain-wrought, with earliest joy the soul possess :
 'Tis bliss to have known the vision that hath been ;
 To dream of happiness is happiness.
 But dearer than that tone, and than the dream
 Sweeter, of bliss, or long-remembered love,
 It is to feel we shall be deathless, here ;
 That earth will speak of us, when gone above.

GEORGE. Sweeter and dearer still than all before,
 Would be to hear some say, I'll say no more :
 A blessing I can scarce expect to be
 From those who are more near than dear to me ;
 You, Charles, for instance.

CHARLES. Why, you greedy elf,
 Would you have all the nonsense to yourself ?

HELEN. Now let us have no argument, I pray.

FRANK. Suppose we have a pretty lively song.

EMMA. Suppose you sing it, then.

FRANK. Well, never say
 I don't intend to help you, right or wrong.
 Will no one sing ? then I'll essay
 A song I learned but yesterday.

Oh gaze on her beautiful soft rolling eye,
 And revel with bliss in its languishing love ;
 Oh gaze on its darkness and brightness, and sigh
 That truth from that heaven should ever remove.
 Oh gaze on her ringlets of raven black hair ;
 And her delicate eyebrow's soft pencilly line ;
 Would her heart were but true as her bosom is fair ;
 That the saint were as worthy of love as the shrine.

I have gazed, I have loved, I have worshipped ; but fain
 I now would declare it, my madness is past ;
 But pleasure no more in my heart will remain
 Than the sparkle of spray on the sand-beach cast.
 I loathe her, and love her ; I never can rail ;
 It is passed, and I reek not ; my fortune I dare :
 Henceforward, the shroud of my hopes is my sail ;
 And the peace which I sought, I have found—in despair

LAURA. Hast thou got anything there for me ?
 For surely thou never shouldst bring me near thee,
 Unless thou hast some gift with thee,
 To bribe me to hear thee.

EDWARD. I bring thee neither bribe nor boon,
 I offer only flowers,
 Which gathered thus the hope devise
 Each other's hearts are ours.
 Receive them lady, in that breast
 With peace and purity to rest :

And oh, if not too much for prayer,
With them, my life my love be there.

LAURA. Thou mayst be happy if thou wilt,
Nor envy these poor flowers their spot ;
For close as in a clenched hand
Thy love within my heart hath lot.

FANNY. Who mentioned ghosts ? In nothing I so glory
As a right thrilling, chilling, good ghost story.

EDWARD. But on a soft and fragrant summer eve,
With glistening flowers and flashing waters by,
One lacks the proper impulse to believe :
But then,—I don't believe them.

WILL. Oh ! nor I.

LUCY. They want a fireside and a howling storm ;
Summer time seems too sensuous and warm.

FREDERIC. Oh ! you are a parlous little infidel,
Or I could tell a tale ; but I am not well.
My head seems wrong, and somehow, altogether,
Feels like a bullet on a peacock's feather.

WALTER. Do you believe that spirits interfere
With men, events, or actions anywhere ?

CHARLES. Let gold bagged priests, from Ganges to Bermudas,
The gospel preach, according to St. Judas ;
It is my opinion, if the truth were known,
That earth pertains to man and beast alone ;
And neither saint, nor fiend, nor bright nor dark angel,
Between the south pole and the port of Archangel,
Have any call, or leave, or will, or power
To meddle with a mortal for an hour.

FANNY. Oh ! you're an unbeliever.

CHARLES. That is true,
So far as I may not believe in you.

HELEN. Sir, you are rude. But since my faith's attacked,
What of immortals ? Is it not a fact
That saints and demons oft-times interact ?
Such the belief at least in times of yore,
Which, if we share not, our disgrace is more.
Things sacred and supernal did we mind
More, and omit the meaner cares of life,
Our souls would grow like holy, like refined,
With loftier thoughts and nobler actions rife.
There is an ancient legend I have heard
About a saint, a demon, and a stone,
Which bears upon this matter word for word ;
A marvel I myself have seen and known.

HARRY. Enchant us, pray, still further. We will be
Moveless and mute to meet your wishes ;
Yours the sole speech, your awful audience we ;
Between us, Saint Antonio, and the fishes.

CHARLES. I beg you will not. I neither wish
To be mistaken for a saint nor fish.

SOPHIA. A spirit speaking as is writ,

Might yet convert you.

CHARLES. Not a whit :
I'd not believe a word I heard of it.
Nor yet of summer fairies, winter ghosts,
Nor any other spiritual hosts.

HELEN. As true as 'tis, the great earth knoweth not
That it is part of heaven, and God's own lot,
Though some there are who know it ; so there be
Bards who affect much infidelity ;
Although they never can abandon quite
Their loyal love to the pure Infinite.
Meantime, you speak more laxly, Charles, than prudent,
And quite forget your recent life as student.

CHARLES. But students, whatso'er their kind,
Must now and then unstring the mind.
In years gone by I have believed so much,
My liege imperial knows I don't deceive her,
That as infinity does on nothing touch,
My next door neighbour's now an unbeliever ;
And no one can imagine who has not
Tried incredulity, how blessed his lot.

EMMA. Just now, Charles, you uncourtously named
The fairies.

CHARLES. I confess.

EMMA. Then I propose,
Of your impiety are we so ashamed,
A solemn censure on such loose opinions ;
And strict expulsion from these free dominions.

CAROLINE. Have mercy !

HELEN. What can be too bad for those
Who trust but their own senses ? I suppose
All here have seen the rings the fairies track
In dancing on the mead ; and he must lack
Mere sense who doubts of their existence, when
Their footsteps are as marked as those of men ?

CHARLES. Commandress of the beautiful ! of these thrones
Supreme disposer ! star incarnate, hear !
Thy sceptral lily no companion knows ;
Thy flowery crown no rival in our sphere.
And though we all have doubtless, curious, viewed,
While large o'erloaded wealthy looking wains,
Quietly swaggering home through leafy lanes,
In autumn evening's shadowy solitude,
Leaving on all low branches, as they come,
Straws for the birds, ears of the harvest home,
Those dark green rings where fairies sit and sup,
Crushing the roseate dew in the acorn cup ;
Where by his new made bride, the bridegroom sips,
The white round moon upon his longing lips
Shimmering ; yet know, 'tis only by report,
By fiction, legend, by mistake, in short,
We smiling tell the old tradition ;

And half affect to understand.
 But while I grant your loftier position,
 Ask any fiery proof which may demand
 The fateful service of this loyal hand ;
 I'll not be reasoned into superstition.

LAURA. We know what sufferings you have undergone.

CHARLES. Could I but say how I've been treated
 How sadly I've been jilted, cheated ;
 It would move the passion of a stone ;
 And yet when not with ladies I'm alone.
 I like the company of women most,
 And after theirs my own :
 Among men I feel always lost.
 Ladies' society for me, or none.

HELEN. Peace ! say no more. We all agree in part.
 This court thinks fit to confiscate your heart ;
 And, till the fine be paid, to one at least—
 Some lady here—you cannot be released.
 Begone ! thank us that you escape so well
 From what it is impossible to tell.

CHARLES. Oh ! I appeal against my fate.

HELEN. Just as a cur a coach may bait.
 It nought avails.

CHARLES. But what am I to do ?
 The puzzling power of a pair of eyes !
 One pair is black, one grey, another blue :
 I am a sacrifice !
 They are three—the sweet sisters I love in my heart,
 And all so unlike and so fair ;
 When with all, I am longing to love them apart,
 And apart, I would all of them there.
 By the world, I dare say, I shall greedy be reckoned,
 But my wish I can name in a word :
 I would live with the first, I would die with the second,
 And immortal I'd be with the third.

HELEN. Go : we have pardoned you with like contrition,
 As we condemned—without condition ;
 This point excepted—that you sing a song
 In token your deliverance is wrong,
 Though just my judgment. Pray don't keep us long ;
 Or banishment perhaps may be your lot.

CHARLES. Oh ! I protest against it.

OTHERS. Despot fair,
 Your sentence is too cruel.

HELEN. Hold slaves, what ?
 Dispute ! I fine you each. So now, despair.
 Thus We adopt first the most stringent measure ;
 Our taxes are your songs, your fines our pleasure.
 These ladies will assist you now and then.

EMMA. Behave yourselves like men.

CHARLES. There's no escaping, it appears to me,
 However nod and wink, etc., be.

I look on thee while singing,
 Thou bright-eyed love of mine,
 As misers while they're ringing
 The gold they love to shine.

Then while on this poor earth,
 Where pain and sorrow bound us,
 We'll quaff the wine in mirth,
 And music make around us ;

We'll drink the wine-god, Bacchus,
 And all our merry friends,
 And if old Death attack us,
 Why, then, the frolic ends.

LAURENCE. Pray, is that all? The moral, to my thought,
 Is yet to come, as certainly it ought.

FRANK. When a man asks for morals, it's a sign
 That he is wanting either them or wine.

CHARLES. Let the young be glad ! though cares in crowds
 Leave scarce a break of blue,
 Yet hope gives wings to morning clouds ;
 And while their shade the sky enshrouds—
 By love and wine which through them shine,
 They are turned to a golden hue.

Then give us wine, for we ought to shine
 In the hour of dark and dew.

HELEN. A broad hint truly. Pay the bard his fee.
 I dare say he is thirsty.

FRANK AND OTHERS. So are we !

CHARLES. What ho ! a butt of sack !

HELEN. But no butt here
 Or sack you'll get another way I fear.

Remember that, within our sacred sight,
 You should continue abstinent, to-night.
 Indeed I don't approve that sort of song ;
 And think it very rude and rather wrong.
 To make my subjects good, is my main plan ;
 Let them be merry with it, if they can.
 Mind, as it is, I am resolved almost,
 To make you forfeit your important post.

EDWARD. Freedom, authority,—twin poles
 Round which revolve all human souls,—
 The many choose that easier state
 Where others for them arbitrate ;
 These, stronger, liberty prefer,
 With livelier pleasure, power to err ;
 But lest rebellion dare dispute the helm
 With her, appointed over us, to be
 The crowned mistress of our joyous realm,
 I here maintain her sacred sovereignty.
 Firm to her throne, her crown, I stand,
 And vouch her irresponsible command.

HELEN. Thanks, Edward ; I would knight you on the spot,
 But, really, I'm afraid my sword's forgot.

However, take my verbal accolade !
 Imagine I embrace you ; and in proof
 Of your high act of fealty just made,
 Sing, sir, I charge you, on your own behoof.

EDWARD. Sing I cannot ; but if you please to list
 A fable, from a fine old moralist,
 Whose name I have forgotten—but no matter—
 Æsop, or some one ; probably the latter—

HELEN. I am sorry, Edward, we're not able
 Your song to commute for a fable ;
 Because in that delicious time
 When gods and nymphs were in their prime,
 Brutes spoke, the poets all allow,
 As sensibly as men do now.

EDWARD. If all said, square not wholly with the time
 Firstly laid down, it matters not in rhyme ;
 Which, with an all-controlling care of things,
 Gives its own laws to chaos, or to kings.

FRANK. A heart full of feeling, a cup full of wine ;
 Come—sip, love ; come—sip, love ;
 There's nothing I lack but that sweet lip of thine ;
 Thy lip, love—thy lip, love.
 Thine eyes are like two romping stars,
 That look as they had drank of wine ;
 And flying from night's brow, had brought
 Their liquid love to thine.
 But I forget ; they're not the words I mean.

HELEN. Wilt sing, Sophia ?

SOPHIA. I obey thee, queen.
 Of knight and lady to each other true,
 I sing the generous lay, their due.

Yes, lady dear, for aye—adieu !
 The false world I defy, lady ;
 But thou, sweet soul, so fair, so true,
 I would thou couldst not sigh, lady.
 Oh ! mind thee not of me when gone,
 But lay thy memory by, lady :
 In light and joyaunce live thou on ;
 Leave me, leave me to sigh, lady !

O fair ! O true ! for aye I go ;
 From thee, from thee I hie, lady :
 I must not yield me to thy woe,
 I dare not list thee sigh, lady.
 Yonder thou seest my father's hall,
 Whose turrets pierce the sky, lady ;
 Ah ! rather might they on me fall,
 Than I would hear thee sigh, lady !

To far-off lands now wends his way ;
 And, if he there should die, lady,
 Oh ! let thy true love, happy, say
 He never caused thee sigh, lady.
 Farewell for aye ! It wrings thy heart,
 It drowns thy darkening eye, lady.
 Farewell ! I feel what 'tis to part ;
 But say thou wilt not sigh, lady !

WILL. May none here ever know as true
 The false cold lover's last adieu !
 But yet to show things as they be,
 The false maid thus ye all may see.

Thou lov'st another, maiden !
 And I am free as thou ;
 My heart with scorn is laden,
 To speak but with thee now.
 Though through thy glossy ringlets
 My hand hath often played,
 Here—take it back ! I loathe it—
 The long imbosomed braid.
 Away, away ! no more with thee,
 Thou falsest, fairest maid !

One heart is ripe and laden
 With love for me e'en now ;
 I'll woo me then the maiden
 More kind, more true than thou.
 Then give it to my rival,
 The black and glossy braid ;
 And give the hand which twined it,
 The cheek whereon it played.
 Away, away ! no more with thee,
 Thou fairest, falsest maid !

HELEN. There beams, methinks, a story in those eyes,
 Lucy, of thine, of faithfulness to death,
 Unlike the desolate discords which now rise
 So oft 'tween hearts love still companioneth.

LUCY. Most gentle sovereign ! sacred be thy hest ;
 Would the light levy yet were worthier thee.
 My lay belongs then to the city bright,
 Which, goddess-like, sprang sparkling from the sea.

Thus to a fair Venetian maid,
 The proudest of the train,
 With which the Doge went forth arrayed
 To wed his vassal main :
 'This very day,' her lover said,
 'Will Venice go the sea to wed.'
 'Say, dearest, how thy knight so true
 Shall win this longed for hand ;
 What deed of daring, valour's due,
 Shall honour love's command ?'
 'I'll have the bridal ring,' said she,
 'Wherewith the Doge will wed the sea !'

Came forth the Doge and all his train,
 And sailed upon the sea ;
 The banners waved, and music's strain
 Rose soft and heavenwardly ;
 And blue waves raced to seize the ring
 Which glided through them glittering.

The lover through the bright array
 Rushed by the Doge's side :
 A plunge—and plume and mantle gay
 Lay lashing on the tide ;
 He heard a shriek, but down he dived,
 To follow where the ring arrived.

He sought so long, that all above
 Believed him gone for aye ;
 Nor knew they 'twas his haughty love
 Who shrieked and swooned away.
 At length he rose to light—half dead—
 But held the ring above his head.

The lady wept—the lover smiled—
 She had not deemed he would
 Have dared it,—was a foolish child—
 And loved as none else could.
 'Take it, and be a faithful bride
 To death,' the lover said, and died.

The lady to a convent hied,
 And took the holy vows ;
 And was till death a faithful bride
 To her eternal spouse.
 And then the ring her lover gave
 They buried with her in her grave.

WALTER. A gem may have a hundred sides,
 And glitter bright in each :
 Where true philosophy presides
 Pleasure it is to teach ;
 I therefore choose the charms of happy faith,
 Secure in love's all present joy ;
 From aught that might e'en dreams alloy,
 With dread of future skaith.

I dreamed of thee, love, in the eve,
 And I lay among bright blushing flowers ;
 I awoke—and, ah ! how could I grieve,
 If the blooms hurried back to their bowers ?

I dreamed of thee, love, in the night,
 And the stars stood around by my head ;
 I awoke to thy beauty so bright,
 And the stars hid their faces and fled.

I dreamed of thee, love, in the morn,
 And a poet's bright dreamings drew nigh ;
 I awoke, and I laughed them to scorn :
 They were black by the blink of thine eye.

I dreamed of thee, love, in the day,
 And I wept, as I slept, o'er thy charms ;
 I awoke, as my dream went away,
 And my tears were all wet on thine arms.

HELEN. Ah ! who would long for bliss above,
 That tastes the joys below ?
 Or, hanging on the lips of Love,
 Would seek to kiss his brow ?
 Unless to change and clear the taste,
 Lest sweets in sameness run to waste.

GEORGE. Come, do you dance ?

LAURENCE.

No ; we two here remain.

MARIAN. But why indulge in mutual sorrows vain ?
 And if I grant this one request—

LAURENCE. It is the last time I shall be so blessed,
 Oh ! thou art kind, and I will think

This wine to be thy love I drink ;
 Blood my heart would gladly miss,
 Could it so be filled with this ;
 And each pulse would madlier move,
 Warm with wine, alive with love.
 Look upon it, love, and weep
 Thine eyelight o'er its purple deep ;
 So each luminous glance shall be
 Like phosphor globelet in the sea.
 Other lovers soon will sue thee—
 Let them—they will ne'er possess
 More than I enjoy who view the
 Lightning of thy loveliness.
 It may be love and light in heaven,
 But here on earth such love is death ;
 And such light is blindness driven,
 Lance-like, through the breast and breath.
 All who love thee sure will die :
 Thy beauty hath fatality.
 For now is near my heart's last hour ;
 I feel it fading like a flower,
 When folding up its leaves to rest,
 And narrowing in its own sweet breast,
 I mean not that I die to-day,
 But that my spirit wears away.
 And, save thyself, see nought to lure it
 Back to earth's falsehoods which immure it.

MARIAN. Thou wilt live yet many happy years,
 Far more in number than the tears
 Men shed o'er broken hearts, if not
 When first forsaken, aye forgot ;
 While we, according to old fashion,
 With our own tears must slake our passion ;
 Or weeping in our bosoms lorn and lone,
 Try if tears cannot turn the heart to stone.

LAURENCE. Promise, dearest, when I die.

MARIAN. Such phrase can scarce to me apply.

LAURENCE. Not to mourn, nor weep, nor sigh ;
 Eyes like thine should never weep,
 Nor sweet bosom sorrow keep.
 Let nor stone, nor verse, nor aught,
 Mark where rests—what loved and thought ;
 If they ask thee where I lie,
 Say, within thy memory.
 Weep not thou o'er grave of mine ;
 Sprinkle on it sparkling wine ;
 That shall keep the grass all new
 Like to an immortal dew ;
 And some fallen star shall stay,
 Watching, while thou art away.
 Scatter rose and ivy wreath
 On the turf I rest beneath ;

Murmur low my favourite song,
 Through the deep blue twilight long ;
 In that soft and soothing tone,
 Heaven to thee, love, lends alone.
 When I'm gone, then, come again ;
 Talk to me in lightsome strain ;
 Should I answer, start not thou !
 I'll but say I'm blessed as now ;
 Should no sound the silence break,
 Think me, oh ! too blessed to speak.
 Let me lie till angels say,
 Wake ! the world's long week is passed :
 Spirit ! this is holy-day ;
 This is God's—the best and last.

MARIAN. Well were such feeling, such request,
 To any save to me addressed.

HELEN. Come, Marian, having finished our parade,
 We have leisure now to list another lay :
 But since you have not been dancing, I'm afraid
 Laurence and you are idle, love-sick, say ?

MARIAN. Could I comply I'd not remain thus mute.

FREDERIC. Shall I sing for you as a substitute ?

I saw a rose was fading—
 Fading 'neath mine eye ;
 When thus, with love's upbraiding,
 I heard that passed one sigh :—
 Oh ! give me back one blush—
 But one from out the many
 I loved to give to thee
 Ere other I knew any—
 Liked or looked on any.

For I am sad and lonely—
 Lone and like to die ;
 Oh ! give me back one only,
 I am too weak to cry.
 The beam, the breeze, the dew,
 Shun now my shrinking bosom ;
 Tears I have need but few,
 Their brine can bring no blossom—
 Me, nor blight nor blossom.

Then to that rose was failing—
 Failing 'neath mine eye,
 I said, 'tis useless wailing ;
 Forget, forgive, and die.
 One look to heaven in prayer,
 And one to me in kindness ;
 The deathwind shook its leaves.
 And I was one with blindness—
 Lone in burning blindness.

HARRY. Although I would not needlessly intrude—

FANNY. To sing, not being asked, is rude.

HARRY. To cease with such a dull down-hearted ditty,
 Would be a wrong, I think, as well as pity.

LUCY. Pray, sing us something livelier, then.

SOPHIA. And don't be personal again.

Annie's eyes are like the night,
 Nell's are like the morning gray;
 Fanny's like the gloaming light,
 Hal's are sunny as the day :
 Bright—dark—blue—gray,
 I could kiss them night and day :
 Grey—blue—dark—bright—
 Morning, evening, noon, and night. .

Annie's brow's arched like the sky,
 Nell's is white without a spot ;
 Hal's is as a palace high,
 Fanny's lowly like a cot :
 High—arched—low—white,
 I could kiss them day and night ;
 White—low—arched—high,
 Kiss them night and day could I.

Annie's lips are warm and bright,
 Fanny's free and full of play ;
 Hal's are sweetest out of sight,
 Nell's are always in the way :
 Bright—warm—sweet—play,
 I could kiss them night and day ;
 Play—sweet—warm—bright,
 All the day and all the night.

LUCY. Had I a little sister
 Just a fairy, six years old ;
 And with eyes of grey or blue,
 Or of dark, or sunny hue,
 Why, I think I might have kissed her,
 In the way that you have told.
 But for sake of sleep and quiet,
 'Twould be mad, I think, to try it.

WILL. Mulcted in song I hasten to discharge
 The debt I owe, and pay it thus in large.

Oh ! Love's a bold pirate—the soul of the sea !
 He impresses the proud, and he fetters the free ;
 His flag's a red heart, in the bows are his guns,
 And the wind's always with him—the foe ever runs.

Oh ! Love's a bold pirate—the son of the sea !
 The winds are his laws, and his laws make him free.
 The star that he steers by, her eye he adores,
 And the haven he's bound for, earth's infinite shores.

Oh ! Love's a bold pirate—the sword of the sea !
 For the poor he hath plunder, and fame for the free ;
 At home in a chase, he nor spares foe nor friend ;
 Though a stern chase, and long chase, the longest must end.

Oh ! Love's a bold pirate—the pet of the sea !
 He will do all, and dare all, 'gainst all that may be ;
 He hails her all fair, just before they fall to't,
 And his foe makes his prize and his consort to boot.

HELEN. Were Festus here, and his strange friend,
 Who like his shadow, follows him,
 We should not feel so lost, nor lend
 One's heart to mirth I scarce commend

Mirth, whose hot breath pure soul will dim,
 For he whom all here present, love,
 And I adore, fails ne'er to move
 Our hearts to dwell on loftier themes
 Than pleasure's chase, or joy's vain dreams.

CHARLES. Your loveliness is always right,
 In fallibility's despite.

Though now as fond of harmless mirth,
 As any faithless miscreant on the earth ;
 Yet cultured mind it scarce beseems,
 All art's achievements, wisdom's gains,
 And truths, which knowledge justly deems
 Outbalance conquest's costliest pains,
 For youth's vain joys to sacrifice ;
 And mute but bright applause of beauty's eyes.

HELEN. Witness, ye stars ! the vow to you addressed ;
 Shall never more such thoughtless hours be given
 By me to merest pleasures ! Thus confessed,
 Behold this starlet, from its velvet rest,
 Like birdling bright, from mother's nest
 Snatched, I have placed upon my breast ;
 Sign that for higher aims my soul hath striven ;
 You, Charles, have seen me, and shall know the rest.

CHARLES. I marked a constellation rise in heaven.

MARIAN. And what remains for me but rest,
 Acceptance, and a soul to peace resigned ?

Let me not heaven's decrees contest,
 Nor scan with carping mind.

Life to lay down, as love to leave,
 If called. I ought without regret ;

Comes not the beauty of the eve
 Till all the sun be set.

And though they last not quite an hour,

Yet have the vespers more

Of holy evercoming power,

Than all day-rites before.

If soon the sunshine of my day

Hath grown beclouded, who shall say

Life's worse probation is not o'er ?

HELEN. Be it, for mercy's sake, I pray.

And now that we enough have laughed and mourned,

This house of kings and queens must stand adjourned.

The day hath darkened into twilight, night

Hath glittered into starlight, since we met ;

The restorative dew hangs thick and bright

On herb and tree and flower ; yon foamy jet

Flings up its bubbling music chillier now ;

And droop the blooms that long have wreathed the brow.

Ladies, and you bold serfs ! I now propose

To bring this joyous vigil to a close ;

And as all bidden have now paid their fine,

To leave these heroes to their fate—their wine.

CHARLES. Except yourself, dear despot, all
Have done their best to hum or squall ;
But if your beautyship would condescend
To teach us what true melody might be,
There's not a creature present but would lend
His ears to listen for a century.

HELEN. Sir, I respect you for your flattery ;
All compliments of course are strange to me ;
The moral strength required for flattery now,
To a fair young queen is great you must allow :
I only envy you the power to make them.

CHARLES. 'Tis sure the better part to take them.

HELEN. We don't believe them when you pay them.

CHARLES. Nor we when we say them.

No longer then, ladies, I pray,
At our flattery or fickleness grieve ;
If you never believe what we say,
We never say what we believe.

HELEN. From our rule and example, gentles, learn,
And lay this to your hearts each one in turn :
Pay compliments, pay visits, pay respects,
But pay your just debts first.

HARRY. Our whole effects !

HELEN. The royal rule of pure equality,
In complaisance and kindness, still shall be
Confided in, and revered by me :
So shall my deed of abdication make
My queendom lost to me, another's gain ;
And so may all who here successive reign,
Nor think themselves too witty, wise nor plain,
Be loved, as loser, for the losing's sake.
Let me a moment's study take.

LUCY. Poor Marian, much I grieve for her ;
Her glorious promise unfulfilled,
Now, nought but love's remembrancer ;
As woods, with sport and music gay,
In dumbness dark, by sunset stilled.

HELEN. She too lives much within my mind ;
And if by her loss I have gained,
In her I honour unrestrained,
That faithfulness she failed to find.
Attend ! my song the constancy discovers
Of a right royal pair of lovers
Whom never thought nor wish to part,
One moment crossed, in mind or heart.

Come, beloved, let us roam
Forth into the golden fields ;
Yon high palace marks our home,
Ours is all that nature yields :
Come, betrothed and espoused,
Earth is rising towards the sun,
And with light and joy aroused,
Meets the love within us one.

Open now thy sleep-dewed eyes,
 Show the subject soul its queen;
 Brighter than the newborn skies
 Their delicious depths I ween.
 Don thee, love, thy royal white;
 Needs no more divine array;
 Fairer than the morning light,
 Rule thou ever with the day.

Come the morrow, day divine,
 All shall wake and bless the sun;
 Those thou lovest shall be mine,
 They and thou and I be one:
 Crown and throne the world shall gain,
 Thou the universal state;
 Bride and beauty, rise and reign,
 Love thy life, and heaven thy fate.

FRANK. The meaning whereof as I take it,—

HELEN. True; it's exactly what you make it.

CHARLES. A right royal riddle, the more I revolve it,
 The greater the mystery to me appears.

As I don't think on earth there's a soul that can solve it,
 I vote to discuss it some day 'mid the spheres.

GEORGE. There's only one thing wanting that could mend
 That song;—a blaze of fireworks at the end.

HELEN. I'll not have aught I sing, or say,
 Discussed, or carped at, anyway.
 Farewell, friends! let us hope to meet again
 When others may be present whom we know.

EDWARD. Go, semi-demi deities, in vain
 True faith the polytheist scouts;
 No soul that's sane 'mong either doubts
 The world will worship idols still.

GEORGE. Pray, go!—

WALTER. At last the so-called soulless have departed,
 Leaving sundry broken-hearted.

FREDERIC. To make the life of perfect mould,
 Like that in Paradise of old,
 Each must give their better part;
 We our soul and they their heart.

LAURENCE. The night hath gone, and all the stars
 Have vanished at the sun's bright warning;
 Still the moon, ghostlike, haunts the heaven,
 As though she deemed to her 'twas given:
 What hath the moon to do with morning?
 So love is fled, and all the fair
 Gone; some with smiling, some with scorning,
 Save one, the fairest far above:
 But what have I to do with love,
 More than the moon hath with the morning?
 The moon hath lost her light, and seems
 To dim the scene she was once adorning:
 So my poor heart, its lovelight gone,
 Still in the heavens where late it shone,
 Lags like the moon upon the morning.

But I am likest to that moon in this,
That I am brightest when my love's away ;
For when with her my borrowed light is lost
As is the moon's amid the dazzling day.

CHARLES. I hear a step ; 'tis his I am sure
By those most wished who forced to endure
These mumbled monologues disdain,
Justly, I think, their selfish strain.

WILL. Friends it becomes friends' trust to seek ;
And social, 'mid such themes as these,
Fit matters fitly treat ; nor speak
Of aught not apt to mirth and ease.

FRANK. 'Tis Festus ! welcome.

FESTUS. Glad am I
To light on guests so well disposed,
So well engaged.

GEORGE. One beaker try
Ere yet this flask's account be closed.

HARRY. Good ! pass the ruby round. There's nought so dull
As to behold a noble vessel full
Of radiant blessings, halt upon its way ;
So fairly give and fairly take, I say.
Progress is nature's unexcepted law ;
'Twere better e'en to go from bad to worse,
Than 'tween two like degrees of ill see-saw ;
Stagnation is an universal curse.
There is nothing stands still—so old sages declare,
But the world's ever changing in earth, sea, and air ;
All the powers of nature, in truth if we trace,
What are they ?—what are they, but running a race ?
The winds from all quarters career through the sky ;
They blow hot, they blow cold, they blow swift, they blow high ;
They follow, they flank, and they fly in our face ;
What are they ?—what are they, but running a race ?
The rivers that run to the ends of the earth,
Flow thousands of miles from the place of their birth ;
From the old and the new world they pour out apace ;
What are they ?—what are they but running a race ?
The worlds they call wanderers, rolling on high,
That enlighten the earth and enliven the sky ;
Going hundreds of miles in a minute through space ;
What are they ?—what are they, but running a race ?
Then with goblets before us, whatever they hold,
Let the hue of the nectar be purple, be gold,—
Let us say as we sit among friends, face to face,
What are they ?—what are they, but running a race ?
FREDERIC. Thou'rt scarcely, Festus, quite so gay
As when, long since, thou went'st away.
FESTUS. I've seen,—what now I cannot say ;
But things that tend the mind to free—
FREDERIC. From what, we'll not discuss. I see !
No more of all our old hilarity !

LAURENCE. All this is lively. Beauty, love, and mirth
Might seem to flavour even vapid earth
To a pure spirit's lips. For my own part,
I own it sinks life deeper in my heart,
At every fresh recurrence : but at times
A thought comes tolling o'er the darkened soul
Which we dare hardly guest ; but ill it chimes
With scenes of joy like this, which from the roll
Of memory we too oft would fain erase.

GEORGE. Not I, one jot, save your ill-omened face.

WALTER. For sacred riddles this is neither time nor place.

LAURENCE. No : but of earth some sacred writings tell
Its flower was paradise, its fruit was hell.

Such is the fruit of worldly pleasure now ;
And thus perhaps my meaning you may trace.

HARRY. We do ; but think it useless to avow
Such views at festive moments like the present.

CHARLES. Indeed they call up notions quite unpleasant.
So, let us rout them by another draught,
And thoughts bright as the beverage quaffed.

HARRY. The future is the world of youth—
The future is our joy ;
We dream of honour, love, and truth,
And bliss without alloy.

But harp not now on love or truth,
Forget your dreams of glory ;
The wine will double us our youth ;
To-morrow dream again of sooth ;
But now to what's before ye.

CHARLES. Some say Truth lies in water, some in wine ;
Suppose I mix them ; now she must be mine.

FRANK. Nothing again will serve to make us merry.

FREDEBIC. 'Twas stupid in you, Laurence.

LAURENCE.

Was it ?

WILL.

Very.

EDWARD. Infernal cant you'll always find
Upsets all pleasant parties of this kind.

GEORGE. He has put the company, 'tis plain, to flight.

WALTER. And so I say—

CHARLES. I'm going, too.

ALL.

Good night !

FESTUS. Now and again, earth's scenes to me
Grow dearer, as I rarer see.

So whilst yon streak of lowliest light
Steals, as to kiss the upward steps of night,
Wait I, to watch, alone the birth
Sublime of morning on the earth.
She comes ! how beauteous are her smiles,
The ever glorious morn ;
Up from old ocean and his isles,
Her car of radiance borne
By the wingèd steeds of light,

Spurning far the shades of night ;
 While darkness gathers round her head,
 Her heavy wings that late lay spread
 Wide o'er the sleeping world ;
 She quits her home, she flies away ;
 Abandons her usurpèd sway ;
 To shame and exile hurled ;
 Thus falsehood fly, in that blessed hour,
 When truth for aye resumes her long lost right and power

XXVII.

Not all regardless, meanwhile, for dear heart
 So lost, but elsewhere bent, through many a sphere,
 Celestial precincts quit, our venturous soul,
 Heaven's varied vast of worlds having long essayed,
 Of spirits sublime consociate, now returned,
 To his life's new liege ;—and joyously they greet
 As boat by breeze, and billow, backed by tide.
 His bright experience he of heavenly homes
 Relates, where spiritual natures kind and high,
 Light-born, which can divine eternal things,
 Passed and to come, dwell ; of the friendly fiend,
 Tells ominously,—uneyeable of the mass,
 Strange forms will show ;—and something comforting speaks,
 From angel lips learned, of lost Eden's crown.
 The walls of Paradise are built up of stones,
 All virtues. Help we God to edify
 Within ourselves, his spiritual temple here.

House, Garden, and Terrace, by a River.

FESTUS and HELEN : afterwards LUCIFER.

HELEN. Come to the light, love ! Let me look on thee
 Let me make sure I have thee. Is it thou ?
 Is this thy hand ? Are these thy velvet lips,—
 Thy lips so lovable ? Nay, speak not yet !
 For oft as I have dreamed of thee, it was
 Thy speaking woke me. I will dream no more.
 Am I alive ? And do I really look
 Upon these soft and sea-blue eyes of thine,
 Wherein I half believe I can espy
 The riches of the sea ? Nay, heavenly hued
 As though they had gained from gazing on the skies
 Their high and starry beauty. These dark rolled looks
 Oh God ! art thou not glad, too, he is here ?—
 Where hast thou been so long ? Never to hear,
 Never to see, nor see one who had seen thee—
 Come now, confess it was not kind to treat
 Me in this manner.

FESTUS. I confess, my love.
But there I have been whence tongue, nor pen, nor hand,
Could token thee ; and seen,—enough ! It is thee
I see now, and thy shadow to me more
Than all above essential.

HELEN. Where hast been ?

FESTUS. Say, am I altered ?

HELEN. Nowise.

FESTUS. It is well.

Then, in the resurrection we may know
Each other. I have been among the worlds ;
Angels, and spirits bodiless.

HELEN. Is this true ?

Can it be so ?

FESTUS. It is :—and that both here,
And elsewhere. When the stars come, thou shalt see
The track I have travelled through the light of night ;
Where I have been, and whence my visitors.

HELEN. And thou hast been with angels all the while,
And still dost love me ?

FESTUS. Constantly as now.
But for the time I did devote my soul
To their divine society, I knew
Thou wouldst forgive ; yet dared not trust myself
To see thee, or to wing one word, for fear
Thy love should overpower the plan conceived,
And acting, in my mind, of visiting
The spirits in their space-embosomed homes.

HELEN. Forgive thee ! 'tis a deed which merits love.
And should I not be proud, too, who can say,
For me he left all angels ?

FESTUS. I forethought
So thou wouldst say ; but with an offering
Came I provided, even with a trophy
Of love angelic, given me for thee ;
For angel bosoms know no jealousy.

HELEN. Show me.

FESTUS. It is of jewels I received
From one who snatched them from the richest wreck
Of matter ever made, the holiest,
And most resplendent.

HELEN. Why, what could it be ?
Jewels are baubles only ; whether pearls
From the sea's lightless depths, or diamonds
Culled from the mountain's crown, or chrysolith,
Cat's eye or moonstone ; or hot carbuncle,
That from the bed of Eden's sunniest stream
Extracted, lamped the ark, what time the roar
Of lions pining for their free sands, smote
The hungry darkness ; toys are they at best.
Jewels are not of all things in my sight
Most precious.

FESTUS. Nor in mine. It is in their use
 Their value lies, the pure thoughts they call up
 Of beauty unearthly, and the qualities high,
 Virtuous, each emblems. For as diamonds show
 Purest of things, light densed, which fire restores
 To air, nought left, so these let sign to thee
 The faith we need, all purity, all light,
 Through fervency resolving into heaven.
 Each bears his cross ; may thine ne'er heavier be,
 Nor darker, than the jewel which there illumines
 Thy bosom, as even to wanderer southward bound,
 Rises, how lovelily ! o'er the calm blue wave,
 The star-cross of the skies, so light, so bright.

HELEN. I thank thee for that wish, and for the love
 Which prompts it—the immeasurable love
 I know is mine, and I with none would share.
 Forgive me ; I have not yet felt my wings.
 Now have I not been patient ? Let me see
 My promised present.

FESTUS. Look, then—they are here ;
 Bracelets of chrysoprase.

HELEN. Most beautiful !
 Henceforth to me these gems more dear shall be,
 More sacred, than to followers of Islâm,
 The diamond star, where, under golden pall,
 The prophet lies of kingless Arabie ;
 Than that mysterious stone which Japhet's son
 Stole from his grandsire, weather foul and fair
 Ruling, the tempest-generating gem ;
 Than the green brilliance of that luminous throne,
 Carved from an emerald block, where once sat young
 Vieija, king of solar blood, 'mid towers
 Palatial, by Serendib's pearly seas,
 Reared airily ; topped now by swart diver's heel ;
 Than those which decked the standard lost for aye
 To Persia, and the proud Iranian line,
 At Kadesieh, where Khaled, sword of God,
 The victory gained of victories ; and those gems
 Doled to his hosts, for every warrior one ;
 Though these more numerous than the winged cloud,
 Which flays a province of its greenery ;
 Yea, than that solar jewel, one solid spark
 Erupted from the sun, which rife with all
 Mysterious powers and virtues, Krishna sought
 I' the north's bear-guarded cavern, and one long moon
 Fought for, both night and day ere he could gain
 Triumphant ;—gem divine ; their every gleam,
 When I speak not, shall thank thee, they are mine.

FESTUS. Come, let me clasp them, dearest, on thine arms ;
 For these of those are worthy, and are named
 In the foundation stones of the bright city,
 Built, blessed abode ! for the immortal saved ;

And such their hue, the golden' green of plains
 Paradisal stretched about it boundlessly ;
 Tinted intenselier with the burning beauty
 Of God's eye, which alone doth light that land,
 Than our earth's cold grass garment with the sun ;
 Though even in the bright, hot, blue-skied east,
 Where he doth live the life of light and heaven ;
 Where, o'er the mountains, at midday is seen
 The morning star ; and the moon tans, at night,
 The cheek of careless sleeper. Take them, love.
 There are no nobler earthly ornaments
 Than jewels of the city of the saved.

HELEN. But how are these of that bright city ? I
 Am eager for their history.

FESTUS. They are
 Thereof prophetically.

HELEN. To me they seem
 Like glittering remnants of a ruinate star,
 Rather than aught of earth.

FESTUS. But earth's they are,
 And Eden's too, whose rich oracular soil
 Gave birth to things which happily now foreshew
 In dumb but radiant prophecy both type
 And substance of true soul-life virtue, all
 Our coming Paradise demands ; which told,
 As told to me by an angel thou wilt learn
 Whence and how came to thy fair arms, these gems.

HELEN. Well ; I will wait till then ; it is enough
 That I believe thee always ;—but would know,
 If not in me too curious to enquire,
 How came about these miracles ? Hast thou raised
 The fiend of fiends, and made a compact dark,
 Sealed with thy blood, symbolic of the soul,
 Whereby all power is given thee for a time,
 All means, all knowledge, to make more secure
 Thy spirit's dread perdition at the end ?
 I of such awful stories oft have heard,
 And lore, soul-jeopardying ; nor know not whither
 Conceit like fascinative might lead even me.
 Myself have charms ; foresee events in dreams ;
 Can prophecy ; and not unskilled to tell
 The secret ties between many a magic herb
 And mortal feeling, faculty, scarce myself
 Condemn for arts so innocent ; but thou !
 Thy helps are mightier far, and more obscure.
 Was it with wand and circle, book and skull,
 With rites forbid, and backward-jabbered prayers,
 In cross-roads, or in churchyard, at full moon,
 By strange instruction of the ghostly dead,
 Thou hast achieved these wonders, and attained
 Such high transcendent powers and secrets ? Speak.
 Or is man's mastery over spirits not

Of such a vile and vulgar consequence ?

FESTUS. Were not my heart as guiltless of all mirth,
As is the oracle of an extinct god
Of its priest-prompted answer, I might smile
To list such askings. Mind's command o'er mind,
Spirit's o'er spirit, is the clear effect
And natural action of an inward gift,
God-given, whereby the incarnate soul hath power
To pass free out of earth and death to heaven
And immortality, and with beings mate,
Diverse of kind, lot, state. This mastery
Means but communion ; means but power to quit
Life's little globule here, and coalesce
With the great mass about us. For the rest,
To raise the devil were an infant's task,
To that of raising man. Why, every one
Conjures the fiend from hell into himself,
When passion chokes or blinds him. Sin is hell.

HELEN. How bring'st a spirit to thee ?

FESTUS. It is my will
Makes visible.

HELEN. Shape me one in words.

FESTUS. They come,
The denizens of other worlds, arrayed
In diverse form and feature, mostly lovely ;
In limb and wing ethereal, finer far
Than an ephemeris' pinion ; others, armed
With gleaming plumes, void-conquering, pranked with fire.
These of like offices, and unlike strengths,
Powers, orders, tendencies, in such degrees
As men, with even more variety, show
Glories dissimilar, duties, and delights.
Even as the ray of meteor, satellite,
Planet and comet, nebula, sun, or star,
Differ, and nature also, so do theirs.
With them is neither need, nor sex, nor age,
Nor generation, growth, decay, nor death ;
Or none I have known ; such may be ; each mature,
Created, and complete with all required
Experience, seems. Perfect from God they come.
Yet have they different degrees of beauty,
Even as of strength and holy excellence.
Sexless, I said, are angels, but the seals
Mental of either holy kind, in all
Prevail. Of milder and more feminine strain
Than others seem some, beauty's proper sex,
Shown but by softer qualities of soul,
More lovable than awful ; more devote
To deeds of individual piety, such,
And grace, than mighty missions fit to task
Sublimest spirits ; the toil, intense and vast,
Of cultivating nations of their kind ;

Of working out from the problem of the world,
 The great results of God,—result, sum, cause.
 These, oft-times, charged with delegated powers,
 Formative or destructive ; those, in chief,
 Ordained to better, and skilled to beautify
 Existence as it is ; with careful love
 To tend upon particular worlds or souls ;
 Warning and training whom they love, to tread
 The soft and blossom-bordered, silvery paths,
 Which lead and lure the soul to paradise ;
 Making the feet shine which do walk on them ;
 While each doth God's great will alike, and both,
 With their whole nature's fulness, love his works.
 To love them, lifts the soul to heaven.

HELEN.

Let me, then !

Whence come they ?

FESTUS.

Some from orbs whose rudest mould's

More worth, more fair, than queenly gem ; the dust
 Dullest they foot, is rosy diamond :—

Others from heaven immediate ; but in high
 And serious love towards those they come to, all.
 Free be the blessed, none else, to visit whom,
 And where they choose : the lost, slaves ever ; here,
 Never but on their Master's merciless
 Business, nor elsewhere. Still with these dark spirits
 Have I conversed, and in their soul's gross shade,
 That, like a mountain cavern of the moon,
 To fixed sight, deepening seems the more we gaze,
 Searched them, and wormed from them the gnawing truth
 Of their extreme perdition ; marking oft
 Nature revealed by torture, as a leaf
 Unfolds in fire, writhes, burns, yet unconsumed :
 Spirits who devastative of weaker soul,
 And fighting obstinately the glad belief,
 God's foresight and disposure of the world,
 Hold all hap-hazard come ; from bad to worst
 Led mainly ; self-tempested. Others are,
 Who garlanded with flowers unwithering, come,
 Or crowned with sunny jewels, clad in light,
 And girded with the lightning ; in their hands
 Wands of pure rays or arrowy starbeams ; some
 Bright as the sun self-lit, in stature tall,
 Strong, straight, and splendid as the golden reed
 Which, heaven's all mothering city, seat of saints,
 Descendible, God shall sometime tread with man,
 Was measured with by the angel ; reed that found
 Aforetime by that angel, nigh the cross,
 And on high taken. God made gold, and now
 Stretched sceptrewise o'er all the skies, the scale
 It is held of power and glory infinite.
 Some gorgeous and gigantic, who with wings,
 Wide as the wings of armies in the field,

Drawn out for death, sweep over heaven ; and eyes
 Deep, dark as sea-worn caverns, with a torch
 Glaring at the end far back. With pinions some
 Like an unfainting rainbow, studded round
 With stones of every hue and excellence,
 Writ o'er with mystic words which none may read,
 But those to whom their spiritual state
 Gives correlate meaning. Me do some in dreams
 Visit ; with some in visions 'mid their own
 Abodes of brightness, bliss, and power, have I
 Made one ; and know full well I shall joy with them
 Ere long their sacred guest, through ages yet
 To come, in worlds not now perhaps create,
 As they have been mine here : and some of them,
 Have walked with, through their wingèd worlds of light,
 Double and triple particoloured suns,
 And systems circling each the other, clad
 In tints of light and air, earth knows not of,
 Nor man ; orbs heaped with mountains, ours to theirs,
 Mere grave-mounds ; and their concave flowered with stars,
 All-hued ; their light now blent, now variant ; moons
 Many, and planets crescent, waning, full,
 In periodic change and intricate beauty,
 At once those strange and most felicitous skies,
 Illumining. As the nature of those spheres
 Their natives are ; some human-like, and some
 Of great gigantic grace and happiest air,
 Yet solemn as the sun ; they walk like winds,
 Whose dwelling is all immaterial space,
 And vanish slowly in the hollow heavens.
 Some of still vaster size and mightier mien,
 Whose movement is as thunder in a cloud,
 Devouring space ; some, like to flickering ghosts
 Of fire, while underneath their every step
 Spring perfumes up and flowers ; bedight in rays
 Aërial of the purest, brightest skies ;
 Others, of sanguine hue, whose step is like
 An instantaneous trembling of the heavens ;
 Others, again, whose forms for utter bright
 Are indefinable ; from place to place
 Their feet pass like the twinklings of the stars ;
 Some of a cold, pure bodily rayonnance
 As is the moon's of naked light, ungarbed
 In circumspherical air, who glide like clouds ;
 And some in bands, some singly, some in groups ;
 For all perchance is starlife after death ;
 While others sworded, sceptred, crowned, and robed,
 Spirits of power who rule each one his star,
 Whose form is fire, whose life strength, and as storms
 Precipitate, come, and go ; nor e'er all known.
 For angels can assume the form they please,
 And transform things inanimate, as once

With earth's angelic watcher I beheld ;
 The lonely diamond which bedecked her pale
 Transparent brow, was oh ! so pure and clear ;
 Like one large drop of paradisal dew,
 Immortalized, it shone ; and such, she said,
 It was ; from a leaflet gathered of the tree
 Of perfect life, on Eden's natal morn.

HELEN. I would it were mine to visit other worlds,
 Or see an angel.

FESTUS. Wilt thou now ?

HELEN. I dare not.
 Not now, at least. I am not in the mood.
 Ere I behold a spirit, methinks, I'd pray.
 Yet if to orbs far off, one may not wend
 Like thee, nor note their natives on the spot ;
 That there's a short if steep way from the stars
 Their lords may come to us by, has been held
 By men for many an age, and held is still.

FESTUS. Light as a leaf they step, or the arrowy
 Footing of breeze, upon a waveless pool.
 Sudden and soft, too, like a waft of light,
 The beautiful immortals come to me.

HELEN. But why art thou of all men favoured thus ?
 To say there is a mystery in this,
 Or aught, is only to confess God. Speak !

FESTUS. It is God's will that I possess this power
 Thus to attract to mine great spirits, as steel
 Magnetically charged, steel draws ; himself
 The magnet of the whole, round and towards whom
 All spirits do tremblingly tend.

HELEN. If, as thou sayest,
 'Tis good, be it to thee good, perduring ever.

FESTUS. He hath no power who hath not power to use.
 Spirit's to soul, as wind to air ; and those
 Livelier, think less of earth, these duller, more :
 Such give me all I seek ; at an unsaid wish
 Would furnish treasures, thrones, or palaces.
 But all these things have I eschewed, and chosen
 Command of mind alone, and of the world
 Unbodied, and all lovely.

HELEN. Is not this
 Pleasure too much for mortal to be good ?

FESTUS. All pleasure is with thee, God ; elsewhere, none.
 Not silver ceiled hall, nor golden throne,
 Set thick with priceless gems as heaven with stars ;
 Or the high heart of youth with its bright hopes ;
 Nor marble gleaming like the white moonlight,
 As 'twere an apparition of a palace ;
 Inlaid with light, as is a waterfall ;
 Not angel pinions coloured like yon cloud
 Bannering the sun's broad evening tent, can match
 Child-musings on life's glorious years to come ;

How, then, his faith to whom the All-kind vouchsafes
 The heaven of his own bosom ? What can tempt
 In its performance, equal to that promise ?
 My soul stands fast to heaven, as doth a star,
 And only God can move it, who moves all.
 There are who might have soared to what I spurned ;
 And like to heavenly orders human souls :
 Some fitted most for contemplation, some
 For action ; those for thrones, and these for wheels.

HELEN. Tell me what they discourse upon, these angels.

FESTUS. Much speak they of what's passed, or coming ; less
 Of present things and actions. These most tell
 Of heavenly histories, rich in vast events ;
 God's dealings with especial worlds ; of tests
 Pending, to come, those ; others of the gone,
 The dim traditions of eternity,
 Or time's first golden moments. One there was,
 From whose sweet lips elapsed, as from a well,
 Continuous, truths, which my soul fertilized
 With richest thoughts, spake to me oft of heaven,
 Salvation, immortality, angels, God.
 Our talk was of divine things alway : soul,
 The diverse states of spirit ; time's testing grades ;
 Truth's, faith's progressive steps ; the varied kinds
 Of Being in different spheres, these physical,
 Those intellectual most. I never tired
 Preferring questions, but at each response,
 My soul drew backwards, sealike, into its depths,
 To urge another charge on him. This spirit
 Long time came to me daily, and whene'er
 I prayed his presence. Many a world he knew
 Right well, eye ne'er hath marked on earth, nor may ;
 Yet perfect variedly. Still more, each time
 He came, had grown his knowledge on mind's truths,
 Inmost, and spirit's sublimest themes. His thoughts,
 Like the immensest features of an orb,
 Whose eyes are blue seas, and whose clear broad brow
 Some cultured continent, showed from time to time,
 Revolved, some mightiest truth. Interpretant, he,
 Teaching divine things by analogy, oft,
 With mortal and material, showed of God,
 Forbidding even, as soul-idolatry,
 To shape a mental image of the one
 Unlikenable, and though the natural mind,
 Skimming the abyss of Being, like a bird,
 Which with its wing's tip thinks to sound the sea,
 Sevenfold, Divinity, might to eye create,
 Awed 'neath its many titles, show ; or, now,
 Godhead, triune,—as through three primal rays,
 None without other, beams the heavenly light ;
 So, virtually inseverable ; so, one ;
 The spirit enlightened inly sees through both,

And of all tentative and devout desire,
To sum and shape Divinity, bans the essay ;
The clear white light of Deity, one and sole,
Infinite, indivisible, being in thought,
Another, ministrant of salvation, sent
All where on Mercy's quests, by Nature's lord ;
Whose thoughts ubiquitous round time's starfold, beat ;
Bent on the good of being ; life's great laws
Dictate of wisdom and pure science, peered
With virtue and verity and reason, right,
Free choice and conscience keen ; the law for sin
'Gainst God, emendative, of repentance, head
Of every moral charter, in all worlds
Identical, aid of sad and searchful soul,
Where'er expatiating, who kindred proofs
Of beauty and stability, like signs
To those he in his own breast bears of truth,
Wisdom and love, shows, whereby denizen,
Of starlet most remote, may recognize
In earthly visitant, liegeman like himself
Of the same kindly Deity, whose acts
And attributes must all where harmonize.
And one of all I knew most, yet the least
Can I of him speak adequately ; for oft
Our thoughts drown speech, like to a foaming force,
Which thunders down the echo it creates.
Yet must I somewhat tell of him, the world's
Spirit evil, impersonate ; strange and wild to know.
Perdition and destruction in him dwelled
Like to a pair of eagles in one nest.
Hollow and wasteful, whirlwindlike, his soul ;
Now, in mysterious grandeur, wasting heaven ;
Contracted, now, to human littleness
And most minute malevolence, as though God
In life reversing, wrecking one poor soul.
The sphere which met, aside rolled, him to let
Pass on his piercing path, whose space-spread wings,
Wide as the wings of darkness when she rose
Scowling and backing upwards, as the sun,
Giant of light, first donned his burning crown,
Gladdening all heaven with his inaugural smile,
Make sad creation. Mightiest in this sphere,
He stood a match for mountains. Ocean's depths
He clave to their rock-bed, as a sword to bone,
With one swoop of his arm. As falls on face
Of some fair planet, lapped in heaven, eclipse
Intimidative, his thought fell on the heart
Shuddering, like angel, who, the thunder curse
O'er-hears, of demon foe. His voice, oppressed
With desolateness, not otherwise than gust
Autumnal, strewing earth with leafy death,
Words bore of fatal cast, both heart and ear

Startling ; words harsh, words heavy, like the first
Handfuls of mould, cast on the coffined dead
Whose end we see for good.

LUCIFER (*entering*). Dost recognize
The portrait, lady ?

HELEN. Festus, who is this ?—
What portrait ?

FESTUS. Wherefore comest thou ? Did I not
Claim privacy, one evening ?

LUCIFER. Why, I called
To keep the proverbs simply in countenance.

FESTUS. Dost not remember, loveliest, some few moons
Agone, and he, who—

HELEN. Surely, I recall
His presence now. Where all were, he was, too,
Welcome. Bright hours, now faded.

LUCIFER. Queen of joy !
Thy soul-thought, like the fragrance of a flower,
Speaks the bright essence whence it emanates.
Unwelcome I should not be, I felt sure.
Pardon my abrupt entrance ; and believe,
If for those hours' contentment, it were e'er
Mine to do thanks, in place of uttering, what
More than that crown of knowledge, high minds like thine
Affect, and if world-hidden, the more, could I
Proffer, as now ?

HELEN. And I, could I aught do,
Say, think, were worth reward. would nought else choose.

FESTUS. Like the bright fish sphered southwards, fed from age
To age, on midnight's luminous food, and still
Of the starry streamlet unreplete, man's mind,
Insaturable of knowledge seems, though bound
To use secrete, most selfish.

HELEN. Be it. For me,
To know more is to live more.

LUCIFER. Both are ripe
For truth's reception. Wherefore not be sealed
With wisdom's sacred seal ? One is, I know,
Who underneath the sun nought better loves
Than heaven-aspiring souls to initiate here,
Into those solemn mysteries, which, once proved,
Stretch through death's sea of shadows, and the world
Of mortal and immortal life make one ;
Illuminative rites, all times maligned
By shallow wits, which yet, inscribed in stars
And skiey legends, overtopped the flood ;
Known but to the white-souled race of light, who born
In heaven, may insight claim of solar truth,
And evermore receive ?

HELEN. Thou givest me
Somewhat to look for, live for, die for, now.
I feel the Sibylline nature in my soul

Uncoil its secret strength. I long to act.

LUCIFER. Who loves or would achieve perfection here,
Lives, like the sun, in restful action, best ;
Imparting light, disclosing not its source.
The sage I mean, full well I know, have known
Long, and ye him shall know. Our student friend
Bring with ye, for his earnest soul, athirst
For the pure draught from wisdom's pearl-lipped bowl
And keen with wholesome hunger for the truth,
Shall chant its thankful compline with your own.
The more so as I doubt not that he hath done
In furtherance of our ends is all he can
Accomplish ; and 'tis fit he have his meed
Prepare him secretly for our emprise.
Trust everything to me, and at the hour
And spot, hereafter to be named, we meet ;
All eager to enjoy the feast of light.

FESTUS. Faith sometimes more expects than truth can grant
And brings a jar for what scarce fills a phial.
But faith, not knowledge, mates with bliss. To some
Not matters, how much knowing, or unknown.
I have seen a grisly bedesman, in the porch
Of a church he'd weep to enter, all aflaut
With tatters,—like a tree which sheds its bark,
And begs its way to ruin, up and down,—
Whose starry-headed sceptre, warded, watched
By angels under oath, waits but in heaven
His regal hand ; hand here outstretched for alms.
The more I know, the quicklier comes the sum
Of all things. Therefore urge me not ; nor thou.
Charm of my being, haste me to forego
For even divine accomplishments, this life
In love now lapsing as a summer stream
In the sun, of nought reflective save of heaven.
Rather forgive me, both ; if, dreading change,
I feel an ominous instinct to avoid,
Though now might be fulfilled my once best aims,
The mystic science proffered.

HELEN. Nay, I pray,
Beseech, command thee on thine allegiance ;
Force me not to compel thee.

FESTUS. Still, content
With present drift, I would not.

HELEN. Alas ! that I
Should live at once to beg of thee, and spurn
That unaccustomed dulness which slow creeps,
And mosses o'er the marble of thy clear mind.
We yet will gain our point.

LUCIFER. I trust so. Me
It much concerns, for I have ends in view
I cannot yet accomplish, this undone.
There are, whose curiousness were quite enough

To ruin half a galaxy of earths,
 Let each but have his, her, bent. Seems to me,
 They scent their self-destruction from afar,
 And hound themselves to their own stark end.

HELEN. While thus my suzerain balances in mind
 His reasons for and 'gainst our plans, take note
 I for myself would learn, as longs one more
 I know, our student friend, what likeliest thou
 Know'st only, and mightst tell ; a secret held
 Profane to search into by those who deem
 The spirit life in God's own hand when once
 From body separated ; albeit we learn
 Ghosts come right willingly, of no offence
 Conscious, from being entreated thus by man.
 But this, and what the immortal sprite first learns
 As truth, and thinks most urgent to impart
 To others, friends or kindred, at all risk,
 I burn to acquire. Wilt aid me in this dear quest ?

LUCIFER. Gladly.

HELEN. Not we on acts or rights rely ;
 But simply upon the true desire to gain
 Right knowledge of the coming time. And now,
 How early and how easily these effects
 To realize, let our friend with thee devise,
 I have it much at heart.

LUCIFER. Be thine content.
 All things shall be provided, as thou wouldst.

FESTUS. This way and that way swayed, but guideless still,
 Like to a sunk skiff, lurching in the ooze,
 My heart lies ; and the sport of every wave
 Of feeling, once contemptuously it keeled,
 Nor floats, nor falls. Time must I have to think.

LUCIFER. Then time be thou, as heretofore, my friend.
 But what shall I do, all this wretched while,
 Thou art engrossed thus ?

FESTUS. Do as I ; make love.

LUCIFER. But what were to fall up. Well, I'll think, too
 For now, as I remember, and to learn
 Of equal beauty, doubtless, pleases all ;
 Last night, not far from hence, a form I marked
 Of queenly beauty seated by the sea
 As eyeing heaven, the birthland of her soul ;
 What time the westering sun, magician-like
 His golden wand had levelled on the main
 And soothed it into silence ; face and form
 Once seen before by me in saddest wise,
 Beside the bier of one, fame held like fair.

FESTUS. Name it not now : the harvest of my heart
 Is always woe, whate'er the joy of bloom ;
 Nor raise the ghost of grief to haunt henceforth
 Life's desolate tenement.

HELEN. Oh ! I know her well,

She is the occultation of my soul
 Prospective ; for I dread lest we should meet.
 It is Elissa. Friendship's favourites once
 Were we, till lordlier likings since, made us
 Distant and cold as earth's opposing poles.
 Seek her, sue if thou carest. I wish her much
 Too well to wish her here. She makes my dreams
 Ghastly.

LUCIFER. Nay, dread her not.

HELEN. Away ! 'Twere well.

LUCIFER. As rival elements that strive to impress
 Their power on mountains, lower and lessen them,
 Nor can aught else ; so peradventure, these.
 One talks of science, one of knowledge. What's
 All science but the last vague certainty,
 Safe to be superseded ? Soon, in sooth,
 We shall have done with knowledge, and their help
 Who have best served us ; all in time, and turn.
 But as I am nothing, if not complaisant,
 Thou, lady, shalt have that thou seekest, speech
 Of an immortal ghost.

HELEN. Account us there.

LUCIFER. To know all magic, all divinities,
 The studies of so many fruitful years
 Have led, or leaned to, what should sum but this,
 The essential knowledge, of all time ?

FESTUS. To me
 Such needs not. Even as with our friend his art
 Of would-be gold-making, before thy boons
 Abounding, did abandon, needful not
 Longer to him ; so, I who now enjoy
 All spiritual privileges, this one, forbid,
 Repudiate and abjure. No art he needs
 Thou favourest ; nor is lawful this to me.

HELEN. We will so order matters each shall come,
 And go, content. I promise for our friend.

FESTUS. Not me thou drawest into that path proscribed.

HELEN. If now, for ill or good, who knows ? Be it tried
 Whether for good or ill.

LUCIFER. I think I know.
 The wise foresee things which,—let fools foretell ;
 With me it is enough to act. And now ;
 Any commands for our planetary friends ?
 I go, make my excuses.

FESTUS. A mistake,
 Dearest, but rectified.

HELEN. Will he return ?

FESTUS. No.

HELEN. Thou art troubled.

FESTUS. Truly. I, far off
 Feel the perturbing influence of his star,
 Ere visible : knew him coming, not yet come.

HELEN. Let us rejoice together, and both hope
Such strange effects may cease, or I shall dread
Him to accompany elsewhere, or to meet
As predisposed, but now—

FESTUS. And he is gone !
Hell hath its own again. Some sorrow chills
Ever the spirit, like to a cloudlet nursed
In the star-giant's bosom.

HELEN. Tell me, love,
More of these angels.

FESTUS. One there was I loved
Of these immortals of a lofty air,
Dimly divine and sad ; and side by side
Him I first spake of, she, with me, would stand,
Listing his converse, shadow illuminate,
Like to the old moon in the young one's arms.
She murmured never at the doom which made
Her sorrow, all enfolding, as air earth ;
But God's will alway named as good and wise.
Pleasure but little was hers ; that, all in plans
Devising of a bliss to come, and tales
Untold of time, or the sweet early earth,
While Eden's dews yet glistened upon her feet.
She was, in truth, our earth's own angel. Oft
In long and luminous sweetness would she treat
These themes, unwearying, pauseless, as a world.
Rise would the sun, and set ; the soul-like moon,
In passive beauty, light from him absorbing,
As prophet inspiration aye from God,
Would set, and rise ; and the far stars, the third
Estate of light, complete day's round divine.
Still spake our angel ; still to the eloquent tongue
On earth heaven's tones retaining, lent I ear.
The shadow of a cloudlet on a lake
The wind is holding now his breath o'er, shows
Not calmler, fairlier not, than thy dear face,
Consoling spirit, when summing even earth's end !
Save that her eye grew darker, and her brow
Brighter with thought as with galactic light
Mid-heaven when clearest, at such times, not I
Had known our earth meant more, or dearer were
To her, than other visitants divine
Which hallow oft mine hours ;—save too that then
As but to touch that chord, numbed icily, thought,
She would cease converse, suddenly ; kneeling, pray
In silent earnestness ; and, anon, rise
And vanish into heaven. My mind is full
Of stories she hath told me of our world.
No word an angel utters lose I ever.
One I will tell thee, now.

HELEN. Do ; let me hear.
Thy talk is the sweet extract of all speech,

And holds mine ear in blissful slavery.

FESTUS. It was on a golden summer afternoon
Close by the grassy marge of a deep tarn,
Nigh half way up a mountain, that we stood,
I and the angel, when she told me this.
Above us rose the grey rocks, by our side
Forests of pines ; and the bright breaking wavelets
Came crowding dancing to the brink, like thoughts
To our lips. Before us shone the sun. We, peaked
As on some finial of the templed earth,
Peer round the infinite, far and near. Then I,
In ecstasy of thought : What need hath man
Of Eden passed, or Paradise to come,
When heaven is round us and within ourselves ?
God's peace, if anywhere, is surely here,
So boundless, so intense this sensible awe
Of nature 'neath his eye ; my soul, with thine,
With all, this hour consentient. Need, the world
Hath always, said Earth's Spirit, of loftier ends,
And meanings, than men's daily duties raise,
Howe'er well done ; of something holier, more
Akin with perfect, or to be, or gone,
To live by, as a pattern. Speak, I said.
The angel waved her hand e'er she began,
As bidding earth be still. The birds ceased singing ;
The trees scarce breathing : and the lake smoothed down
Each shining wrinkle ; and the wind drew off.
Time leaned him o'er his scythe, and listening, wept.
The circling sphere reined in her lightning pace
A moment. Ocean hushed his snow-maned steeds,
And a cloud hid the sun, as hides the face
A meditative hand. Then spake she thus.
Scarce had the sweet song of the morning stars,
Which rang through space at the first sign of life
Our earth gave, springing from the lap of God
On to her orbit ended, when from heaven
Came down a white-winged host, and eastwards, where
Lay Eden's pleasaunce, first their pinions furled,
Alighting reverently. There, marked whate'er
Could be of good, as seemed, for man secured
By care divine, one brief debate in vow
Ended, that they on his behalf should build
Out of the riches of the soil around
A house to God. Here were the ruby rocks ;
And there in blocks the unquarried diamond lay ;
Topaz and emerald mountain, chrysoprase,
Sardonyx, sunstone, crystal, jacinth, stood
All light, with the stilly action of a star,
Or sea-based iceberg, blinding, to such sight
As men now boast, degenerate. These with tools
Tempered in heaven, the band angelic wrought,
Raised, fitted, polished, aptly imbedding first

The deep foundations of the holy dome
 On bright and beaten gold. And all the while,
 Songs to God's glory hovered around the work,
 Like rainbows round a fountain. Day and night,
 Went on the hallowed labour till 'twas done :
 And yet but thrice the sun set ; more than thrice
 Rose not the moon ; so quick is work divine.
 Tower all, and roof and pinnacle, without,
 Were solid diamond. Based on chrysoprase,
 Gold-green, of meek humility sign, the wall
 Opalline, emblem of all virtues ; soared
 Lustrous, with amethystine fruitage topped,
 Of temperance type ;—expressive these to man
 Of loftiest excellences and deepest needs
 In edifying his soul, the angels strove
 Symbolically to show how best, by these
 Of earthly things transpicuousest, men might
 The beauty of purity learn, the joy of peace
 With God, and bliss of perfectness in him,
 Sole source, sole end of worship, or in heaven
 Or earth, to all intelligences. Within,
 The dome was eye-blue sapphire, truth supreme,
 God's infinite unity, shadowing,—sown with stars
 And glittering spheres constellate. The wide floor,
 One emerald, earthlike, veined with silver and gold,
 Marble and mineral, glowed, of every hue
 And marvellous quality. There, the meanest thing
 Earth's most magnificent now, was gold, to God
 First due, to him sole. Of one ruby shaped
 Stood the high altar, heartwise. Columned round
 With alabaster pure was all. And now,
 So high and bright it shone in the midday light,
 It could be seen from heaven. Upon their thrones
 The sun-eyed angels hailed it ; and there rose
 In heaven, a hurricane shout of angel-joy
 Which echoed for a thousand years. One dark,
 One solitary, and far-foreseeing thought
 Passed, like a planet's transit o'er the sun,
 Across the brow of God. But soon he smiles
 Earthwards on the angels, and that smile, to himself
 The temple consecrates. And they who built
 Bowed themselves down, and worshipped in its walls,
 High on the front were writ these words :—To God ;
 The heavenlies built this for the earthly ones,
 That in his worship both might mix on earth,
 As afterwards they hope to do in heaven.
 Had man stood good in Eden this had been.
 He fell, and Eden vanished. The shining shrine,
 Piled by the angels of all precious things,
 For the joint worship of heaven's sons and earth's,
 Fell with him, on the fixed and looked-for day
 He should have met God and his angels, there :

The very day he disobeyed, and joined
 Death's host black-bannered. Man fell. Eden fell.
 The groves and grounds which God the Lord's own feet
 Had hallowed ; the all-hued and odorous bowers
 Where angels wandered, wishing them in heaven ;
 The trees of life and knowledge, trees of death
 And madness as they proved to man, all fell ;
 And that bright fane fell first. No death-doomed eye
 Gazed on its glory. Earthquakes gulped it down.
 Long, to the world unknown, and half forgotten
 In heaven, the angels' temple, reared to embrace
 All nations, with God's hosts, in saintliest rites
 Ceaseless of sequence worshipping, at once,—
 Lay in its grave, the cherubs' flaming swords
 The sole sad torches of its funeral ; till,
 When the just flood sin 'venging, pure itself
 And purifying, came, doomed, earth's giant heart
 Burst shell-like, and so scattered far and wide
 The fragments of that angel-built fane,
 High, holy, happy, stainless, as a star,
 In Eden once,—whereof all gems men still
 Deem precious, are ; and yet may find imbedded
 Potentially in those pure walls whose towers
 Of light, the extense of space o'erawing, bar
 From ill or false, the abode to be of saints,
 Glorious. For they who, truth-taught, now, the right
 Significance of things,—more worthful far
 Than the things themselves, can recognize—all gems
 Perceive, in their best use, but mystic signs
 And types of virtue, tests foundational
 Of spirit reborn on high, and proofs of soul's
 Most perfect qualities : love's deep rubied glow,
 Of charity towards mankind ; hope's emerald gleam,
 Of ultimate grace ; faith's adamant flame,
 Godwards ; crown these of spiritual life ; these, base ;
 These, 'midst ; of the celestial city of God,
 And capital of his kingdom, state divine,
 Star-mansioned ; state imperishable, of heaven.
 The angel ended : and the winds, waves, clouds,
 Woods undulative, and merry birds went on
 As theretofore in brightness, strength, and music.
 One scarce could think that earth at all had fallen,
 To see her beauty. If sin's errless brand
 Dimmed her predestined brow, 'twas surely hid
 In natural art, from every eye but God's.
 All things seemed innocence and happiness.
 I was all thanks. And look ! the angel said ;
 Take these, and give to one thou lovest best.
 Mine own hands saved them from the shining ruin
 I late have told thee of ; and me she gave
 What now are greenly glowing upon thine arms.
 Ere I could answer, she was up, star-high,

Winning her way through heaven.

HELEN. How shall I thank thee
Enough, or that kind angel, who hath made
The gift to me dear doubly, by the advice
Hidden in the present? 'Tis that, humility,
Doubtless I lack. We'll see to it. I shall be
Afraid almost to wear; but part with them
I would not, for the treasures of all stars.
How show my thanks?

FESTUS. Love me as now, dear beauty,
Present or absent, always, and 'twill be
More than enough for me, of recompense.

HELEN. Hast met our angel latewhile?

FESTUS. I have not.
Yet oft methinks I see her ; catch a glimpse
Of her sun-circling pinions or bright feet
Which, than for earth, for rainbows fitter seem,
Or heaven's triumphal arch more firm and pure
Than whitest marble ; see her, seated oft
On some high snowy cloud-cliff, harp in hand,
Singing the sun to sleep, as down he lays
His head of glory upon the rocking deep.
And so sing thou to me.

HELEN. There, rest thy brow.
Bow thyself down, before my feet. Rest ! rest !

Oh not the diamond starry bright
Can so delight my view,
As doth the moonstone's changing light,
And gleamy glowing hue :
Now blue as heaven, and then anon,
As golden as the sun ;
It hath a charm in every change ;
In brightening, darkening one.

And so with beauty, so with love,
And everlasting mind ;
Each takes its tint from things above,
And shines as it's inclined,
Or from, or towards, celestial truth,
With blind, or brilliant, eye ;
And only lights as it reflects
The life-light of the sky.

He sleeps ! the fate of many a gracious moral
This ! to be stranded on a drowsy ear.

XXVIII.

Life's gaudier vanities shunned, or banned, the world
 Escaped from ; passion dignified ; some talk
 Of fable and of cabala, mystic lore ;
 War, actual earth regarded, heaven's reproach
 Unanswerable, 'gainst man ; the fruitful claims
 Of friendship in abeyance long, restored ;
 Pauses, reposeful, for a time the strain.
 In memory we, passed life, passed feat of bard,
 Bards best interpreters of life's sad dream,
 Review ; and plans for peaceful progress aid.
 Note, nathless, change impending, schemes conceived
 By help of evil, that in dismay will end
 Undreamed of, but all innocently ensured
 By beauty and hero and friend ; marking, who knows ?
 Heart, soul, and intellect, homed in tranquil ease.
 Who mind's interior realm, life's outer treat ;
 Things passed, to come ;—secret in secret cased,
 Like balls of ivory carven, enclosing, each,
 One than itself less, than itself one more ;
 And, like life's double enigma, so involved,
 The sole solution makes the mystery.

*Home ; an interior. FESTUS, HELEN at her piano.—Afterwards.
 the STUDENT. Evening.*

HELEN. I cannot live away from thee. How can
 A floweret live without its root ? Attend !
 I am to say and do just as I please.

That's my great charter, is't not ? Thou art king ;
 I am to command thee ? May I ? That I will.

FESTUS. I love to be enslaved. Oh ! I would rather
 Obey thee, beauty, than rule men by millions.

HELEN. Near, as afar, I will have love the same.
 With a bright sameness like this diamond,
 Which, wheresoe'er the light, 'like brilliant shines.
 And thou shalt say all manner of pretty things
 To me ; mind, to me only ; write love-songs
 About me ; and I will sing them to myself ;
 Perhaps to thee, sometimes, as it were now ;
 If I should happen to feel very kind.

FESTUS. Sing now.

HELEN. No !

FESTUS. Tyrant, I will banish thee.
 Knowst thou what comes of tyrants, in the main ?

HELEN. Oh ! though an absolutist, I'm bound by laws
 Of my own making.

FESTUS. Laws that can be sung ?

HELEN. Nay, if to sing and play please, I would die
 To music. Wrong 'twas to deny thee aught.

But be not anger'd with me, for though heaven
 Forgave, I'd ne'er forgive myself if I
 Brought sorrow on thee.

FESTUS. Thou wouldst not, I believe.

HELEN. Nought fear I but an unkind word from thee.
 Dark death may frighten children, hell, the wretch
 Who feels that he deserves it, but for me,
 I do, nor say, aught worthy the pure pain
 Thy frown can give, or a cold careless look,
 If I do wrong, forgive me, or I die,
 And thou wilt then than I be wretcheder ;
 The unforgiving, than the unforgiven.

FESTUS. I do absolve thee beauty of all faults
 Passed, present, and to come. Thy sole defects
 Like unformed stars, inconstellate in heaven,
 Are but perfection incognized, whose worth
 I'd match against the forces of five spheres
 By happiest apparitions manned.

HELEN. Enough.
 What was I saying? I love this instrument ;
 It speaks ; it thinks ! nay, I could kiss it. Look !
 Jealous ? three things love I, half killingly :
 Thee lastly ; and this, next ; and myself first.

FESTUS. Thou art a teazeful, tiresome thing ; and yet
 Do I weary of thee ? Never ; but could gaze,
 Faint from delight, upon thy countenance,
 In the serious joy with which we eye and eye
 Space boundless, visible attribute of God,
 Who all things making in himself, makes thus
 And there, the heaven we hope for ; and can find
 No point wherefrom to take its altitude ;
 For the infinite is upwards, and above
 Aught highest create, conceivable ; so I,
 Musing upon thy face, expression like
 Heavenly, and heightening e'er the more I muse,
 Believe.

HELEN. I am happy now with thee.

FESTUS. And I.
 Steeped in the still sweet dew of thy soft beauty,
 Like earth at day-dawn lifting up her head
 Out of her sleep, star-watched, to face the sun ;
 So I to front the world on leaving thee.
 Oh, there is inspiration in thy look,
 Poesie, prophecy. Come thou hither, love.
 This evening air, how sweet.

HELEN. It breathes on us,
 Fresher and clearer through these dewy vine-leaves,
 Fit for the forehead of the young wine-god.

FESTUS. A large red egg of light the moon lies like,
 On the dark moor-hill ; and now, rising slow,
 Beams on the clear flood, smilingly intent,
 Like a fair face which loves to look on itself,
 Saying, " There is no wonder that men love me.
 For I am beautiful."

HELEN. Well, I don't mind
 Others first told me.

FESTUS. Now were soon enough.

HELEN. Nay, nothing comes to us too soon but sorrow.

FESTUS. For all were happiness, if all might live
Long, or die soon enough ; for even us.
Virtue they tell us lives in self-denial ;
My virtue is indulgence. I was born
To gratify myself unboundedly,
So that I wronged none else. These arms were given me
To clasp the beautiful, cleave the wave, or, branched
In tenfold perfectness, prove how supreme
O'er nature, man ; these limbs to wander where
I will ; these eyes to view all fair or grand,
Earth claims ; these ears to list my loved one's voice ;
These lips to be divinized by her kiss ;
And every sense, pulse, passion, power, to be
Ripened into perfect life.

HELEN. True virtue is one
With nature, or 'tis nothing. It is love.
Remember'st not when, the other eve, thy friend,
The Student called, a tale was on thy tongue,
Out of the poets, about love, and sorrow,
And happiness and such things,—he interrupted ?

FESTUS. But I forget such tales when thou art by.
Besides I asked him here again to-night,
Here, at this hour, and he is punctual.

HELEN. In truth then I despair of hearing it.
He keeps his word relentlessly ; with not
More pride an Indian shows his foeman's scalp,
Than he his watch for punctuality.

FESTUS. But tales of love are far more readily made,
Than made, remembered.

HELEN. Tell-tale, make one then.

FESTUS. Well then my story says there was a pair
Of lovers, once—

HELEN. Once ! nay, how singular !

FESTUS. But where they lived, indeed, I quite forget :
Say, anywhere ; say here : their names were,—I
Forget those too. Say, anyone's ; say ours.

HELEN. So far 'tis not improbable ; pertinent, too.
No wild vagaries ; quite in bounds. I hear.

FESTUS. The lady was, of course, most beautiful,
And made her lover do just as she pleased ;
He therefore doing unwisely, doing wrong ;
Neglecting all in heaven and earth, but her.
They met, sang, walked, talked folly, just as all
Such couples do ; adored each other ; thought,
Spoke, wrote, dreamed of and for, nought else in life
Than their sweet selves. And so on.

HELEN. Pray proceed.

FESTUS. That's all.

HELEN. Oh no !

FESTUS. Well, thus the tale ends, stay !

No, I cannot remember, nor invent.

HELEN. Do think.

FESTUS. I can't.

HELEN. Oh, then I don't like that.

It is not in earnest.

FESTUS. Well, in earnest then.

She did but look upon him, and his blood
Pulsed stronglier from his heart her gaze to meet ;
For at each glance of those sweet eyes, a soul
Looked forth as from the azure gates of heaven ;
She laid her finger on him, and he felt,
As might a formless mass of marble feel,
While feature after feature of a god
Were being wrought from out of it. She spake ;
And his love-wildered and idolatrous soul
Clung to the aëry music of her words,
Like a bird on a bough, high swaying in the wind.
Even as a storm-charged cloud that in the night,
Will have wept itself away, unseen, nor made
Earth thankless 'ware of its self sacrifice,
That it might richen one pasture ; so, too, he,
To endow with all his love, her heart he loved,
Would the whole firmament of his life exhaust
In happying her, unnoisefully :—and she,
Soft as a feather-footed cloud in heaven,
While her sad face grew bright like night with stars,
Would turn her brow to his, and both be happy ;
Numbered among the constellations they.

HELEN. As some ambitious wave, far out at sea,
Whitens the wide horizon with one flash,
And dies for ever, is, I foresee, my life.

FESTUS. Helen, my love. Art there ? Oh ! it has been
Such a day, so bright, as that thou knowest when first
I said I loved thee, that long sunny day
We passed upon the waters, heeding nought,
Nought seeing, save each other.

HELEN. I remember,
The one thing wise, good, I have ever done,
Was to love thee. Would none else were as I,
Wise. Didst not say that student would be here ?

FESTUS. I think I hear him every minute come.

HELEN. I deemed him in our revellous days gone by,
Intolerably reserved.

FESTUS. Not wholly, sure.

HELEN. Once when thou wert afar, he came, and then,
Right sadly entertained me, the whole while,
Themes so recondite, studies so abstruse
Perpending, that he left me much perplexed.
Much he explained to me of cabbala ;
And correspondences, and symbol type ;
Angelic tongues and astral alphabets ;
All which, quoth he, learned aptly, make for us

An upward reaching lesson to the skies,
 And as all souls are but the breath divine,
 Dewlike, conglobed into separate entities,
 By inimical matter, limited here
 Of pure necessity, and by distance cooled,
 From heaven's life-giving centre, so, he affirmed
 That manhood is but angelhood disguised
 In some frustrate condition, earthwards urged ;
 And angelhood but reascendant—

FESTUS. Man ?

HELEN. Nay, truly I forget me. In his scheme,
 But one thing was, and that was infinite ;
 But whether man or deity, not now
 Can I recall ; indifferent which, it seemed.
 Constrained, in fine, to check him, I averred
 Such converse to be awful. Truly it is ;
 And all commune, he added, when, to its depths,
 The soul itself unbosoms, and high thought
 Calls to truth's far profound, as to the sea,
 The clouds storm-fraught, that groan with thunder-fire,
 And passionate flashings blent with blinding rain.

FESTUS. He ceased then ?

HELEN. Ceased.

FESTUS. And this was what he taught ?

HELEN. Nay, this was what I learned. Teach could he not ;
 For he lacks faith, nor can indoctrinate.
 All things he seems to know, and nought believes ;
 Save as a possibility. To me,
 His mind shows inconclusive, as an arch
 Without its facial keystone.

FESTUS. Sad ! yet I
 Feel my heart ripen towards him as a friend,
 More than to other unit of my kind.
 All minds must thread the burning shares of doubt ;
 Who wholly scatheless 'scape are blessed ; are few.
 Thine be it, him to imbue with faith like thine ;
 And so remunerate with commutual debt.
 He, for the future, will be one of us.

HELEN. It is not kind. We should be more alone.
 But let it pass. I am at peace with thee ;
 And pardon thee, and give thee leave to live.

FESTUS. Magnanimous !

HELEN. When earth, and heaven, and all
 Things seem so bright and lovely for our sakes,
 It were a sin not to be happy. See,
 The moon is up, it is the dawn of night.
 Stands by her side one bold, bright, steady star,
 Star of her heart, and heir to all her light ;
 Whereon she looks, so proudly mild and calm,
 As she were mother of that star, and him
 Knew, in his sphere a sovran sun ; but there,
 By her dear side, in the great strife of lights

To shine to God, he, filially, had failed,
 And hid his arrows and his bow of beams.
 Mother of stars ! the heavens look up to thee.
 They shine the brighter but to hide thy waning ;
 They wait and wane for thee to enlarge thy beauty ;
 They give thee all their glory, night by night ;
 Their number makes not less thy loneliness,
 Nor loveliness.

FESTUS. Heaven's beauty grows on us ;
 And when the elder worlds have ta'en their seats,
 Come the divine ones, gathering one by one,
 And family by family, with still
 And holy air, into the house of God,
 The house of light he hath builded for himself ;
 And worship him in silence and in sadness,
 Immortal and immovable. And there,
 Night after night, they meet to worship God.
 For us this witness of the worlds is given,
 That we may add ourselves to their great glory,
 And worship with them. They are there for lights,
 To light us on our way through heaven to God.
 And we, too, have the power of light in us.
 Ye stars, how bright ye shine to-night ; mayhap
 Ye are the resurrection of the worlds,
 Glorified globes of light ! Shall ours be like ye ?
 Nay, but it is ! this wild, dark earth of ours,
 Whose face shows furrowed like a losing gamester's,
 Is shining round, and bright, and smooth in air,
 Millions of miles off. Not a single path
 Of thought I tread, but leads to God. And when
 Her time is out, and earth shall have travailed again
 With the divine dust of man, her sons, reborn
 Immortal, shall to her due reverence make ;
 While she, their mother, purified by fire,
 Shall sit her down in heaven, a bride of God,
 And handmaid of the everbeing One.
 Our earth is learning all accomplishments
 To fit her for her bridehood.

HELEN.

He is here.

FESTUS.

Welcome.

STUDENT. I thought the night was beautiful,
 But find the in-door scene still lovelier.

HELEN. Ah ! all is beautiful where beauty is.

STUDENT. Night hath made many bards ; she is so lovely.
 For it is beauty maketh poesie,
 As from the dancing eye come tears of light.
 Night hath made many bards ; she is so lovely.
 And they have praised her to her starry face,
 So long, that she hath blushed and left them, often.
 When first and last we met, we talked on studies ;
 Mingling with men, as even by thee advised,
 Abandoning abstruse studies, as of stars,

In their antique relations, thought, with earth
 Seed-gold, or medicinal all-heal ; now
 As profitless, unless to raise the mind
 To ends more high and pure ; ends better gained
 By severe knowledge of time's actual truths,
 Than meditation on mere possibles ;
 All other intellectual aims resigned,
 As recreative, apart from duty's aims,
 Save metaphysic lore which fines the mind,
 And teaches Being's vast necessities,
 Poetry only I confess is mine ;
 The only thing I think of now, or read ;
 Feeding my soul upon the soft, and sweet,
 And delicate imaginings of song ;
 For as nightingales do upon glowworms feed,
 So poets live upon the living light
 Of nature and of beauty ; they love light.

FESTUS. But poetry is not confined to books,
 For the creative spirit thou seekest, is in thee,
 About thee, and all others ; yea, it hath
 God's everywhere-ness.

STUDENT. Truly. It was for this
 I sought to know thy thoughts, and hear the course
 Thou wouldst lay out for one who longs to win
 A name among the nations.

FESTUS. First of all,
 Care not about the name, but bind thyself,
 Body and soul, to nature hiddenly.
 Lo, the great march of stars from earth to earth,
 Through heaven how silent ! Earth speaks inly alone.
 Let no man know thy business, save some friend ;
 For it is with all men and all living things.
 Experience and imagination, sire
 And mother are of song, the harp and hand.
 The poet, in his lay reflects his soul,
 As some lone nymph beside a woodland well,
 Whose clear white limbs, like animated light,
 Make glad our heart and our sight sanctify,
 The soft and shadowy miracle of her form.
 Take care that such be perfect ; that thou feel
 Full sympathy with all life ; a sense that e'en
 In nature's wildest, massiest, may be felt
 His rock-sustaining presence. God they serve
 Best, who adorn humanity most, and help,
 By holiest usurpation of his gifts,
 Happy to make all fellow life around.
 The bard must have a kind, courageous heart,
 And natural chivalry to aid the weak.
 He must believe the best of everything ;
 Love all below, and worship all above.
 All animals are living hieroglyphs.
 The dashing dog, and stealthy-stepping cat,

Hawk, bull, and all that breathe, mean something more
 To the true eye than their shapes show ; for all
 Were made in love, and made to be beloved.
 Thus must he think as to earth's lower life,
 Who seeks to win the world to thought and love,
 As doth the bard, whose habit is all kindness
 To every thing.

HELEN. I love to hear of such.
 Could we but think with the intensity
 We love with, one might do great things, I think.

FESTUS. Kindness is wisdom.

HELEN. Touching, love, these tribes
 Creatural, thou speakst so meetly of, were none
 Like them, in lovelier worlds, or what in fine,
 Hast thou of other marvels ?

FESTUS. What is earth,
 But one majestic miracle, wrought of God ?

HELEN. But didst thou never meet, 'mid far-off orbs,
 None of those strange commingled shapes which here
 Romance and fiction boast of, and bards sing ?
 Methinks in worlds half finished, one might see,
 As earth once saw in the solemn days of old,
 Mysterious sphinx, or dragon flamy breathed,
 And centaur, lord of all four-footed life,
 Who with man's heart and head, and a steed's hoofs,
 Scoured earth, impetuous, windlike ; Minotaur
 For whose just death in labyrinthine lair,
 Bright Ariadne won her star-pearled crown ;
 Man-bull, or lion winged, cherubic shaped,
 Or solar, proud Assyria erst adored ;
 Simorgh, and rokh, and phoenix cometlike,
 Which nested in the sun ; and in the deep,
 Sea-horse fish-tailed ; and not unknown, even now,
 Or here, to nature, where, by Jura's isle,
 Fond mermaid, hybrid of the earth and sea,
 Than fair-haired Yseult vainer of her locks,
 Erect amid the waves, on caudal curve
 Poises her form, weed-girdled ; in her hand
 Her shadow glassed ; she, rivals knowing none,
 Beckons the youth belated in his skiff,
 Far out of hail of land ; seductive, lauds
 The quiet cave, surpassing in sweet gloom,
 Earth's superficial glare ; her bridal home ;
 Her dower of pearl and amber ; wide domain ;
 The charm immortal of the foamy sea ;
 And every joy ; oft, over shoulders white
 Showering the shining tresses, which, as oft
 The lapping waves displace ; but he, with fear
 Half dead, though scarce incurious of the deeps,
 Nor to adventure mostly disinclined,
 Rows faster, lest the moon set, till he hears
 His heart's betrothed, him wailing on the beach,

Some simple cottage maid ?

FESTUS. Far happier he.

HELEN. I grant ye. But hadst thou no strange-world toy ;

No faithful fire-drake dogging every step ;
 No spotted wyvern, giant pet, bat-winged ;
 Lithe libbard, purring panther, cat of God,
 Nor shoulder-perching harpy ? Didst not find
 One salamander fire-conceived, oft seen
 Luxurious, nestling in the seven-yearred flame ;
 Emblem of him who 'mid the children three,
 Thrown in the furnace, trode the coals serene ;
 Nor milk-white unicorn, not so rare, bestride,
 Through greenwood, ambled once by faerie power,
 Predictive of the damsel of the sea ?

FESTUS. I can't remember these things, if I saw.

HELEN. There may be savagery in other worlds,
 If less than man's exterminative. For see,
 How cruel, men ; not to themselves-wards less
 Than lives below them ; lives God hath not thought
 Unworthy him to make, we ought not deem
 Unworthy of our care ; but though create
 To serve or suffer, treat, as made by him
 With high humanity. Yet in their death
 Look how men wanton ! till the heart it grieves
 Scarcely, when these, in blind revenge of blood
 Causelessly shed, retaliate death for death ;
 As when in icy seas the barb-gored whale
 Drags his tormentors deathwards ; and though these
 For life kill, others slay for play, as still
 In Zetland, where betimes some ruthless wight,
 Scaling the scour, in sport the nests despoils
 Of auk or gull ; they, crowding clamorous round,
 Intruded on, insulted, injured, sore
 His ears besiege, until with querulous wing,
 One stern and ancient fowl assails his eyne ;
 His hold gives way ; he topples headlong down,
 From crag to crag rebounding, till the sea,
 For many a ghastly loan responsible,
 Seals up the expiring secret ; and, avenged,
 God's feathered kind scream triumph. Him, at home,
 Or dame, or mother, by her drowsy wheel,
 Expects ; and through the ominous night, her ears
 Sharpens to catch his customary step,
 Whose ghost now flaunts the breakers ; or, far off,
 Lamps the lone wold. I cannot brook to see
 This needless, useless, senseless, slaughter strewn
 Round earth as though death-torments were a boon
 We owed it to our kingdom to impart,
 Impartially, to all created life.
 But how all minor cruelties of man
 Are summed in war, conclusive of all crimes ;
 When not defensive, indefensible !

FESTUS. Light of my heart ! thou say'st the veriest truth.
 How is it Christian nations boast of war,
 Practised to steep the earth in brother blood,
 Deeper than heathen ? Shows not current time
 Man's deadliest wit at work how most to slay ?
 Scan earth, and mark the myriads massed in arms,
 Scowling defiant hate ; burning to reave
 Each other of domain, state, power ; or prove
 Predominance of race ! What hosts arrayed
 In battailous pomp meet, east and west, the eye !
 Not those so vast, to immemorial age
 Sacred, of Scythic birth, which, floodlike, surged
 Far round the mount Armenian ; nor so wide,
 Those once the crutchèd hermit's eyes beheld,
 Uprist in bodily answer to his prayers,
 By Danube's bank ; whence hardy knighthood's shield ;
 Nor host immixed that, by Propontic wave,
 Its ranks deployed by nations to salute
 The golden-footed dame, who sheathed in steel
 Her lillied breast, and couched her lance for love
 Of Christ ; and with the hope of wresting back
 From infidels his hallowed tomb, led on,
 With jewelled rein, and morion snowy plumed,
 Her maiden chivalry, and glittering queans,
 Luckless ; for ah ! their virgin valour quailed,
 Ere yet upon the spoil, the manlier might
 Bounded of stern Islam ; nor, till unhorsed,
 Unhelmed, knew these the delicate foe they had thrown,
 Flower-breathed, as in the moon of blossoms earth.

STUDENT. Nor that by sunny Tours, where fell the force
 Moorish, beneath the Frankland monarch's mace,
 Which Europe saved from turk and Koraun ;
 Nor those above whose heads the flaming sword,
 Two-handled, and two-edged with pest and fire,
 Of militant angel, pierced the clouds, and slew,
 At one stroke, squadrons.

FESTUS. Still, from age to age,
 Prevails the universal lust of death
 And vulgar slaughter ; war of all bad things
 Worst, and man's crowning crime, save when for faith
 Or freedom waged ; but when for greed of ground,
 Or mere dominion, cursed of man and God.
 As when the clans Mogul—which late had left
 Their maze of mountains the high plains that bound,
 Whence Buzanghir and all his valorous brood,
 Heads of the golden horde, and sons of light,
 Whom Alancova to her sun-spouse bare
 At treble birth ; the lords of throne and crown,
 Khaliph's, or king's, or Tzar's, which Zinghis gained,
 Or filial Kublai, with all-suasive sword,
 Bright ravisher of souls, into one realm
 Rounded and died ; strict theists they who held

In God and their own swords, a brief, brave creed,—
 O'er Europe's quaking heart careered, and like
 Sunblast on greensward, graved their fiery name
 In blazing towns and harvests blackening ; woke,
 With tramp terrific of their horses' hoofs.
 The slumbering nations ; to its stony foot
 Burned Breslaw, and at Wollstadt won a field
 Red with the gore of Christian chivalry,
 But fled from their own conquest ; fled aghast ;
 And perished in the wilds where they were born ;
 And when in later times and distant lands,
 By countless wrongs indignant made, distraught,
 The Azteks for their lord, and woe-crowned head,
 Stern Moctezuma, archer of the heavens,—
 Beset by bigots, falsely named white gods,
 Their deeds of black fiends rather savouring,
 But, steel-clad cowards, strong in fulminant arms,
 Instalment thought of thunder at command,
 By the plume-mailed barbarians, gold who held
 The sun's bright tearlets—sought in vain to buy
 Humanity of Christians, infidel these
 To earth's best faith, nor capable to preach,
 By bloodshed, creed pacific ; or southward, where
 His quadripartite world the Ynga ruled ;
 Earth's universal passion wasting not
 On king-faced coin, but hallowing every mote
 To beauty, or to deity, till came,
 Crowding, the guests profane, with priest and cross,
 Who slaughtering thousands of his flock, and him
 Incarcerating, bade pile his prison walls
 With the soul-soiling dross they hungered for,
 Ere he should know release, his sole release
 Death ;—how humiliated must all men feel,
 Dumb with unmeasurable guilt, to know
 That for these vicious ends the self-deemed good,
 Have all good illed ; and, in faith's peace-pledged name,
 Blasphemous, vaunted of the invader's crimes,
 And gloried in the havoc of his hand.

HELEN. Yea, even Christians sometimes may do well ;
 As when by gay Chalons the Paynim Hun,
 His hosts arrayed, contemptuous of the faith
 Which nerved their arms who conquered, wrongly he
 Deeming in godless numbers victory lay ;
 Just cause had they to thank God, and to wave
 The sword of sacred triumph in his cause,
 One with the cause of freedom, faith, and life.

STUDENT. But now with that thou spakest of, before
 This privileged interceptress of all speech
 Deflect as from a gem's face, thought's bright rays ;
 Go on, I pray. I came to be informed.
 Thou knowest my ambition, and I joy
 To feel thou feedest it with purest food.

FESTUS. Tell all I feel I cannot; save myself,
Seeming to know but little; yet am not shamed
To have studied mine own life, and know it like
Tear-blistered letter, fruit and proof which holds
Of feeling deeper than poor pen can score,
Or the eye discover; and that, oft, my heart's thoughts
Will rise and shake my breast, as madmen shake
The stanchions of their dungeons, and howl out.

HELEN. But thou wast telling us of poesie,
And the kind nature-hearted bards.

FESTUS. I was
I knew one well, a friend of mine: his mind,
Taste, temper, habits, temperament and life;
Yet with heart kind as beats, he was, earthlike,
No sooner made than marred, for ever. Young,
He wrote amid the ruins of his heart;
They were his throne and theme—like some lone king,
Who tells the story of the land he lost,
And how he lost it.

STUDENT. Tell us more of him.

HELEN. Nay, but it saddens thee.

FESTUS. 'Tis like enough.
We slip away like shadows into shade;
We end, and make no mark we had begun;
We come to nothing, like a pure intent.
When we have hoped, sought, striven, and lost our aim,
Then the truth fronts us, beaming out of darkness,
Like a white brow, through its overshadowing hair.

STUDENT. Unkindly truth; nay, be not so severe.
One of us dies; so end our claims, our plans.
We choose our side, we take our ground, high strung,
Or meek; most, hopeful; deem life's game our own,
To the third figure; lo! our balls drop down
Plump, or clack skywards; and it is we who have scored
Nothing:—not even a bye. Truly, too true.

FESTUS. But I was speaking of my friend. He, quick,
Generous, and simple, obstinate in end,
High-hearted, was from his youth; his spirit rose
In many a glittering fold and gleamy crest,
Hydra-like to its hindrance; mastering all,
Save one thing—love, and that out-hearted him.
Nor did he think enough, till it was over,
How bright a thing he was breaking, or he would
Surely have shunned it, nor have let his life
Be pulled to pieces, like a rose by a child.
But passions cause remorse that make the heart,
Musing the passed, writhe 'neath its ivory vault,
And thin the blood by weeping at a night.
If madness wrought the sin, the sin wrought madness,
And made a round of ruin. It is sad
To see the light of beauty wane away;
Know eyes are dimming, bosom shrivelling, feet

Losing their spring, and limbs their lily roundness ;
 But it is worse to feel our heart-spring gone,
 To lose hope, care not for the coming thing,
 And feel all things go to decay with us,
 As 'twere our life's eleventh month : and yet
 All this he went through, young.

HELEN. Poor soul ! I should
 Have loved him for his sorrows.

FESTUS. It is not love
 Brings sorrow, but love's objects.

STUDENT. Then he loved.

FESTUS. I said so. I have seen him, when he hath had
 A letter from his lady dear, he blessed
 The paper that her hand had travelled over,
 And her eye looked on ; and would think he saw
 Gleams of that light she lavished from her eyes,
 Wandering amid the words of love there traced,
 Like glowworms among beds of flowers. He seemed
 To bear with being but because she loved him.
 She was the sheath wherein his soul had rest,
 As hath a sword from war : and he at night,
 Would solemnly and singularly curse
 Each minute he had not thought of her.

HELEN. Now that
 Was truly like a lover ! and she loved
 Him, and him only.

FESTUS. Well, perhaps it was so.
 But he could not restrain his heart, but loved
 In that voluptuous purity of taste
 Which dwells on beauty coldly, and yet kindly,
 As night-dew, whensoever he met with beauty.

HELEN. It was a pity, that inconstancy—
 If she he loved were but as good and fair
 As he was worthy of.

FESTUS. Dark and bright there is,
 To everything but beauty such as thine,
 And that's all bright. If fault in him, 'twas one,
 Which made him do sweet wrongs. It mattered little.
 Or right or wrong, he were alike unhappy.
 Ah me ! ah me ! that there should be so much
 To call up love, so little to delight !
 The best enjoyment is half disappointment
 To that we mean, or would have, in this world. Oft
 There are strange and sudden lights which startle youth,
 Prowling adventurously, life's seas, and seem
 To beacon it towards them ; they are wreckers' lights ;
 But he shunned these ; and gathering, when she rose,
 Moon of his life, his true if perilous course,
 Though a sea of sorrow struck him, he yet held
 On ; dashed all grief-ful from him as a bark
 Spray from her bow bounding : he lifted up
 His head, and the deep ate his shadow merely.

HELEN. A poet not in love, is out at sea.
Indeed ; he must have a lay-figure, too.

FESTUS. I mean but to describe this friend of mine.

HELEN. Describe the lady, too ; she was, say, at once,
Above all praise and all comparison.

FESTUS. Why, true. Her heart was all humanity,
Her soul all God's ; in spirit and in form,
Like fair. Her cheek had the pale pearly pink
Of sea-shells, the world's loveliest tint, as though
She lived, one half might deem, on roses sopped
In silver dew ; she spake as with the voice
Of spherul harmony, which greets the soul,
When at the hour of death, the saved one knows
His sister angels near ; her eloquent eye
Deposed, to him who loved, so sweet its hue,
All other lights as grades of gloom ; her dark
Long rolling locks were like a stream the slave
Might search for gold, and searching, find. Her frown—

HELEN. Nay, could she frown ?

FESTUS. Ay, but a radiant frown,
In common with the stars.

STUDENT. Stars, fending now
Business, now pleasure or alliance, men
Malignant call, but so malign. Our stars,
Permissive, or averse, are always kind.

HELEN. Enough. I have her picture perfect. Cease.

STUDENT. What were his griefs ?

FESTUS. Who hath most of heart, knows most
Of sorrow ; folly and sin and memory make
A curse the future fires vie with in vain.
The sorrows of the soul are graver still.

STUDENT. Where and when did he study ? Mixed he much
With the world, or was he, in his choice, recluse ?

FESTUS. He had no times of study, and no place ;
All places and all times to him were one.

His soul was like the wind-harp, which he loved,
And sounded only when the spirit blew.
Sometimes in feasts and follies, for he went,
Life-like through all things ; and his thoughts then rose,
Like sparkles in the bright wine, brighter still.

Sometimes in dreams ; and then the shining words
Would wake him in the dark before his face.
All things talked thoughts to him. The sea went mad,
And the wind whined as 'twere in pain, to show
Each one his meaning ; and the awful sun
Thundered his thoughts into him ; and at night,
The stars would whisper theirs, the moon sigh hers.
The spirit speaks all tongues and understands ;
Both God's and angel's, man's and all dumb things,
Down to an insect's inarticulate hum,
And an inaudible organ. And speak it did
The spirit, to him, of everything create ;

And with the moony eyes like those we see,
 Thousands on thousands, crowding air in dreams,
 Looked into him its mighty meanings, till
 He felt the power fulfil him, as a cloud
 In every filament feels the forming wind.
 He spake the world's one tongue ; in earth and heaven
 There is but one, it is the word of truth.
 To him the eye let out its hidden meaning ;
 And young and old made their hearts over to him ;
 And thoughts were told to him, as unto none
 Save one who heareth said and unsaid, all.
 And his heart held these as a grate its gleeds,
 Where others warm them.

STUDENT. I would I had known him.

FESTUS. All things to him were inspiration : wood,
 Wold, hill and field, sea, city, and solitude ;
 Crowds, streets, and man where'er he was ; and God's
 Blue eye, which is above us. Soundless sands,
 Stern cliff with sea-weed sandalled ; patient beach,
 Storm deprecating ; and still, deep, stately stream
 Travelling, instinctive, mainwards ; mead and plain ;
 Summer's warm soil and winter's cruel sky,
 As a sea eaglet's eye clear, icy blue,
 All things to him bare thoughts of minstrelsy.
 He drew his light from that he was midst, as a lamp
 Matter of fire, from air, though it show not. His
 Was but the power to light what might be lit.
 A muse he met in every lovely maid ;
 And learned a song from every lip he loved.
 But his heart ripened most 'neath southern eyes,
 Which sunned their sweets into him all day long :
 For fortune called him southwards, towards the sun.

HELEN. Did he love music ?

FESTUS. The only music he
 Or learned or listened to, was from the lips
 Of her he loved ; and then he learned by heart
 Her words, delicious as the candied dew,
 And durable, which gems the rose, on shores
 Pacific, where the westering sun hath sown
 The soil conceptive with the seed of gold ;
 Albeit she would try to teach him tunes,
 And put his fingers on the keys ; but he
 Could only see her eyes ; and hear her voice ;
 And feel her touch.

HELEN. Why he was much like thee.

FESTUS. We had some points in common. When we love,
 All air breathes music, as though insucked through lips
 Of lyre Æolian ; nature's every life
 To ours responsive, like the branchy bower,
 By Indian bards feigned, which, with ceaseless song,
 Answers the sun's bright raylets ; nor till eve,
 Folds her melodious leaves, and all night rests ;

Drinking deep draughts of silence.

STUDENT. Was he proud?

FESTUS. Lowliness is the base of every virtue :
Who goes the lowest builds, doubt not, the safest.
My God keeps half his pity for the proud.

STUDENT. Was he world-wise?

FESTUS. The only wonder is
He knew so much, leading the life he did.

STUDENT. Yet it may seem less strange when we think back,
How we, in the obscure chamber of the heart,
Sitting alone, see the world tabled to us ;
And the world wonders how recluses know
So much, and most of all how we know them.
It is they who paint themselves upon our hearts,
In their own lights and darknesses, not we ;
One stream of light is to us from above,
And that is that we see by, light of God.

FESTUS. We do not make our thoughts ; they grow in us
Like grain in wood : the growth is of the skies,
The skies, of nature ; nature of God. The world
Is full of glorious likenesses ; and these
'Tis the bard's task, beside his general scope
Of story, fancy framed, to assort, and make
From the common chords man's heart is strung withal,
Music ; from dumb earth, heavenly harmony ;
And for souls parched mid the world's wilds, to draw,
As from his altar's sacred hollows drew
Druid, his dews celestial, holy draught
Of life-thought clear, sweet, nutrient, as spring water,
Welling its way through flowers. As nature teems
With outward symbols fair or saintly, all,
Of our best thoughts,—though not till night we see
Heaven moveth, and a darkness thick with suns,
So faith with clearest proof the thoughts we think,
The eternal truths of science, and divine
Virtue subsist in God, as stars in heaven ;
And as these specks of light great worlds will prove,
When we approach them sometime free from flesh,
So too our thoughts will become magnified
To mindlike things immortal. And as space
Seems but a property of God, wherein
All matter abides, so, other attributes
The infinite homes may be of mind and soul.
Rise from our souls' thoughts, even as from the sea
The clouds sublimed in heaven. The cloud is cold,
Although ablaze with lightning—though it shine
At all points like a constellation ; so
We live not to ourselves, our work is life ;
In bright and ceaseless labour, as a star
To all worlds save itself, shines.

HELEN.

And thy friend,
And she he loved, happy were they together?

FESTUS. True love is ever tragic, grievous, grave.
Bards and their beauties are like double stars,
One in their bright effect.

HELEN. Whose light is love.

STUDENT. Or is it poesie thou meanest?

FESTUS. Both :

For love is poesie—it doth create ;
From fading features, dim soul, doubtful heart,
And this world's wretched happiness, a life
Which is as near to heaven as are the stars.

HELEN. Love's heart turns sometimes faint, like a sick pearl.
He needs such delicate diet as the bird
Gold-breasted, which on cloudlets only morn
Hath ambered fed, ere rose-breath'd summer end
Dies, nor can brook the shadow of decline.

FESTUS. They parted ; and she named heaven's judgment seat,
As their next place of meeting ; and it was kept
By her, at least, so far that nowhere else
Could it be made until the day of doom.

HELEN. So soon men's passion passes ! yea it sinks
Like foam into the troubled wave which bore it.
Merciful God ! let me entreat thy mercy !
I have seen all the woes of men ; pain, death,
Remorse, and worldly ruin ; they are little,
Weighed with the woe of woman when forsaken
By him she loved and trusted. Hear, too, thou !
Lady of heaven, maid-mother, thou in whom,
Betaking him into mortality,
As in thy son he took it into him,
God from the temporal end eternal made
One soul-world same and ever, oh ! for the sake
Of thine own womanhood, with divinity crowned,
Pray away aught of evil from her soul ;
And take her out of anguish unto thee,
Always, as thou didst this one !

FESTUS. Who doth not
Believe that that he loveth cannot die ?

There is no mote of death in thine eye's beams
To hint of dusk, or darkness, or decay ;
Eclipse upon eclipse, and death on death ;
No ! immortality sits mirrored there,
Like a fair face long looking on itself ;
Yet shalt thou lie in death's angelic garb,
As in a dream of dress, my beautiful :
The worm shall trail across thine unsunned sweets,
And feast him on the heart men pined to death for ;
Yea, have a happier knowledge of thy beauties
Than best-loved lover's dream e'er duped him with.

HELEN. It is unkind to think of me in this wise ;
Beside that I may die by sea, or fire,
Or gulped down quick by earthquakes, who can tell ?
Surely the stars must feel that they are bright,

In beauty, number, nature, infinite ;
 And the strong sense we have of God in us,
 Makes me believe my soul can never cease.
 The temples perish, but the God still lives.

FESTUS. It is therefore that I love thee ; for that when
 The fiery perfection of the world,
 The sun, shall be a shadow, and burnt out,
 There is an impulse to eternity
 Raised by this moment's love.

HELEN. I pray it may !
 Time is the crescent shape to bounded eye
 Of what is ever perfect unto God.
 The bosom heaves to heaven, and to the stars ;
 Our very hearts throb upwards, our eyes look ;
 Our aspirations always are divine.

FESTUS. Yet is it in distress of soul we see
 Most of the God about us, as at night
 Of nature's limitless vast ; for then the soul,
 Seeking the infinite purity, most in prayer,
 By the holy Spirit o'ershadowed, doth conceive
 And in creative darkness, unsuspect
 Of the wise world, ignorant of this, perfects
 Its restitutive salvation ; with its source
 Reconciliate and end ; its humanized
 Divinity, say, of life. Think God, then, shows
 His face no less toward us in spiritual gloom,
 Than light.

HELEN. But not all gloom felicity brings ;
 And hers, I fear, brought somewhat less than bliss.
 There is a love which acts to death, and through death,
 And may come white, and bright, and clear like paper
 From refuse, or from purest things at first :
 It is beyond life's accidents. For things
 We make no compt of, have in them the seeds
 Of life, use, beauty, like the cores of fruit
 We fling away.

STUDENT. But of thy friend ; say more.
 Perhaps much happiness in friendship made
 Amends for his love's sorrows ?

FESTUS. Ask me not.

HELEN. But loved he never after ? Came there none
 To roll the stone from his sepulchral heart,
 And sit in it, an angel ?

FESTUS. Ah, my life !
 My more than life, mine immortality !
 Both man and womankind belie their nature
 When they are not kind ; and thy words are kind,
 Loving, and beautiful like thyself ; thine eye
 And thy tongue's tone, and all that speak thy soul
 Are like it. There's a something in the shape
 Of harps, as though they had primarily been made
 By music, self-inamorated, that sought

Some form of utterance adequate to exhaust
 Her passionate sense of perfectness ; so seems
 Thine absolute beauty but the effect of soul,
 Sublimed and sweetened by the virtuous love
 Of others' excellencies ; thou, indeed, to me
 Reminder of her loving'st sympathies.
 And he, of whom thou askest, loved again.
 Couldst thou have loved one unlike men, whose heart
 Was wrinkled long before his brow ? who would
 Have cursed himself, if he had dared tempt God
 To ratify his curse, in fire ; and yet
 With whom to look on beauty was a need,
 A thirst was, yea, a passion ?

HELEN. Yes, I think
 I could have loved him ; but no, not unless
 He were like thee ; unless he had been, been thee.
 Tell me, what was it rendered him so wretched,
 At heart ?

FESTUS. I may not tell thee.

STUDENT. But tell me,
 How, and on what he wrote, this friend of thine ?

FESTUS. Love, mirth, woe, pleasure, was in turn his theme ;
 And the great good which beauty does the soul ;
 And the God-made necessity of things.
 And like that noble knight in olden tale,
 Who changed his armour's hue at each fresh charge,
 By virtue of his lady-love's strange ring ;
 So that none knew him save his private page,
 And she who cried, God save him, every time
 He brake spears with the brave till he quelled all ;
 So he applied him to all themes that came ;
 Loving the most to breast the rapid deeps
 Where others had been drowned ; and heeding nought,
 Where danger might not fill the place of fame.
 And 'mid the magic circle of those sounds,
 His lyre rayed out, spell-bound himself he stood,
 Like a stilled storm. It is no task for suns
 To shine. He knew himself a bard ordained,
 More than inspired, of God, inspirited :
 Making himself like an electric rod
 A lure for lightning feelings ; and his words
 Like things that fall in thunder, things the mind,
 In a dark, hot, cloudful state, makes meteor ball-like,
 To spirits then spoken with spirit tongue, prevailed ;
 Compelled by wizard word of truth, they came,
 And rayed them round him from the ends of heaven.
 For as he all bards, he was born of beauty,
 And with a natural fitness to draw down
 All tones and shades of beauty to his soul :
 Even as the rainbow-tinted shell, which lies
 Miles deep at bottom of the sea, hath all
 Colours of skies, and flowers, and gems, and plumes ;

And all by nature, which doth reproduce
 Like loveliness in seeming opposites.
 And nature loved him, for he was to her
 Faithful and loyal, tending well the weal
 Of every life, or blood, or sap, was hers.
 To her grand soul, death needless, needless pain,
 Is deadly sin. Him, therefore, in august
 Silence she edified in deeper things
 Than the world's babble robs of; speaking him
 In that instinctive paradisaal tongue,
 Known now to nature, poet-priests, and God,
 Who out of clouds, flowers, fountains, dreams, and stars,
 Weave a commutual language; and conveyed
 Clear to his eyes her veiled blaze of light;
 And led him by the hand, and made him trace,
 'Neath time's disguising dust, the broad-based truth,
 And iron impress, ineffaceable,
 Of the eternal die. Divinerlike,
 He ate the hearts of things ere yet he could
 Prophecy of them; or predict of worlds
 By augury of angels; or foresee
 Life's round career accomplished in the skies.
 As though his ear had been by serpents lipped,
 He wist the world of life. Of every tribe
 Of living things the key-spell he could speak,
 And entered in its presence with the sign
 Of perfect acceptation. He of all
 Was free; a branch from off the tree of light,
 Heaven-planted midst the wood we all indwell.
 There was a light in death itself to him,
 And the to-come had a clear presence. Thus
 Ofttimes, at eve, together, eyeing heaven,
 Creating stars, we sat, and stretching forth
 The eagle-headed sceptre of the soul,
 Ruled them at ease enthroned; with gifts of power
 Widening the empyrean world on world.
 And dropping down the fathom-line of thought
 Into the future years, conceive what 'twere
 To quit this world's necessitated deeps,
 These strange librating bonds of birth and death;
 And sweep into the still, free, sphere on high,
 On faith and truth, our undeveloped wings,
 Like to a vital wind, invisible,
 Yet firmed and bounded in a beauteous form;
 To give up life for being, and be gods:
 Such were the heights we aimed at, such the deeps
 He reached and yet alive; for, sooth to say,
 His soul was twin-lifed with a certain star;
 When he died, the star also died.

HELEN.

Note that.

STUDENT. Now, I beseech thee, be not as a stream
 Which publisheth its shallows, but keeps all

Its deep things to itself. What mean'st thou, say?

That all things have a soul, an inner life,
I much believe, such things as trees and flowers,
Life not as ours like positive, less defined,
Still conscious, rivers, may be, mountains, stars :
That substance implies essence, essence life ;
That what to us mere matter shows, may show
As mentally to others ; and that men
Are shadows inwardly invert of gods ;
So, at the fiery martyrdom of earth
When all heaven's starry sisterhood shall sigh
The blazing pyre to see, our souls will rise
With its spherul spirit, and there in it for ever,
Abide, all life's forms blessed and beautified.

HELEN. What if it were that life, commencing first
In kind atomic, step by step, through all
The countless grades vegetative, animal,
Of nature, should progress at last to man,
Possessed with all the intermediate powers
Of all the schooling spheres he had passed through, till
This mere novice of humanity,
Encumbered with the veil of flesh, expired ;
The spirit shall take the plenar vows of truth,
And enter upon the sanctity of heaven ?

FESTUS. Our life is like the wizard's charmed ring ,
Death's heads, and loathsome things fill up the ground,
But spirits wing about, and wait on us,
While yet the hour of enchantment is.
And while we keep within, we are safe, and can
Force them to do our bidding.

STUDENT. It is very true.

HELEN. Oh that mine eyes had virtues, such as those
Native to fairy fount in Sarnia's isle,
Rock-pinnacled by the foamy braid of the sea,
Of reach how perilous ; whereby, oft, of yore,
'Neath summer moons, danced elf-dom, and its wave
Fresh, sweet, so gifted, that man's eye inlaved
Thereafter knew sense spiritual, and view
Of bodiless things ; gift with the fairies now
Gone, possibly ; but if not, how little it were
To risk all, this once gained !

STUDENT. Risk nothing, beauty ;
But know that always properly prepared
By holy meditation and divine lore,
Souls, self-adapted knowledge to receive
Are, by the truth desired illumined ; made
Fit to convene, converse with purer powers
Which do unseen surround us e'er, and gladden
In human good and exaltation ; oft,
The face of heaven is not more clear to one,
Than to another, outwardly ; but this,
By strong intention of his soul perceives,

Attracts, unites himself to essences,
 And elemental spirits, of wider range,
 And more beneficent nature ; by whose aid,
 Occasion, circumstance, futurity,
 Impress on him their image, and impart
 Their secrets to his soul ; thus chance and lot
 Are sacred things ; thus dreams are verities.
 The soul too, which, like mountain lakelet lifts
 Its gaze to heaven alone, will, doubt not, learn
 Glased in its visionary profound, to read
 Ere long, futurity's cloudy forms ; or mark
 Clear through time's crystalline egg, the chanceful play
 Of spirits, and strange forecomingness of things.
 Saidst not this friend of thine was even a bard
 And wrote prophetic of time's afterworld ?

FESTUS. Ay, and time's present.

STUDENT.

What of that he wrote ?

FESTUS. Some said, and lied, that he blasphemed, because
 God's name he used, as spirits use it, barely ;
 Yet surely more sublime in nakedness
 Statuelike, than in a whole tongue of dress ;
 And these, to all eternity lie (if not
 Saved, when our God shall raze that lie from life,
 And from his own eternal memory) lied.
 Thou knowest, God, that to the full of worship,
 All things are worshipful ; and thy great name
 In all its awful brevity hath nought
 Unholy breeding in it ; but doth bless
 Rather the tongue that utters it ; for me,
 No higher office ask I than to fling
 My spirit before thy feet, and cry thy name,
 God, through eternity. Who irreverence sees
 In use of that true name may used have been
 To misuse, or, profane, to take in vain ;
 And the same eye might see obscenity
 In pure white statues. Know, therefore, for such,
 Who others wilfully mislead, or cause
 Needless, to err, the word is lied, though writ
 In honeyed dew, upon a lily leaf,
 With quill of nightingale, like love-letters
 Of Oberon, to the bright Titania penned,
 Fairest of all the fays. Thou, loving truth,
 Call all things by their names ; heil call thou hell ;
 Archangel call archangel ; and God, God.

STUDENT. Such harm not, may be, long. Full oft the foe,
 Most combative, himself works out for us,
 And our true cause, unmeant success ; as when
 Heaven's bow, sign intermediary, high bent
 'Twixt sky and earth, some eve, storm-darkened, eyes
 The coronal arch of her aerial bridge
 Swept off by swarthy clouds, of unseen gusts
 The allies too visible, both conjured to quench

Her peerless life, (daughter and heiress sole
 Of the sun, death-stricken) she nothing daunted, vows
 Splendid reprise ; and seeing soundly based
 On earth and sea her compassing lines, with use
 Potent of natural magic born mature,
 Out of contrarious blasts and raging powers,
 Imponderable, of air, strange help compels
 From hostile elements ; and the more their shock,
 Exasperate, she the more her shining ranks
 Forms and reforms, indomitable ; from foes
 Foes beckons ; smiles them to herself, and quick
 In her own luminous livery, self arrayed
 Her glad recruits ; she, conscious of the end's
 Reflective triumph, from the field of fight
 Slowly retreats ; such self constructive force
 Haply, we reap, was thine.

HELEN.

Not such were all ?

FESTUS. No. Unlike those false brethren who of old
 Sold their enlightener, and into duress cast
 The unfolders of high secrets, far and near,
 All generous souls rejoiced in his, as one
 Which holding in itself the sacred power
 Thought to eternize, things divine achieves
 With infinite ease ; an earnest thus to all
 Of gifts to come ; as when young Jove, who now
 Had but dethroned his sire, nor lots yet cast
 With his titanic kin for the world's sway ;
 In earth's first blaze of conquest Maia met,
 From out whose hallowed bosom lacteal life
 He erst had drawn ; she, bending close to his,
 Her sad, but luminous brow, with thought oppressed
 Of favour and dominion, him besought
 What sometime he would grant her for long love,
 And bounteousness of both her mothering breasts ;
 He, poor in all but in immortality ;
 Earth was not his as yet, but only heaven ;
 Touched her with hand deific, and her form,
 Flashing with light, flew upwards as a star,
 Insphered in air for ever. There she shines ;
 Not envious of the power, her earthly veins
 Which filled with astral life ; but laudful, blessed.
 So too the high and bright souled sons of men
 Loved him and praised. Yet praise nor fame he loved.
 Men's praise an awe of one's own self so breeds
 In us, we fear lest the heart, magician-like,
 Show more than we can bear. The clouds which hide
 The mental mountains rising nighest heaven,
 Are full of finest lightning, and a breath
 Can give those gathered shadows fearful life,
 And launch their light in thunder o'er the world.
 Yet was not all perfection, even finite ;
 But that at first defective most, he wholed,

By tyrant will, and toilful skill, use-born ;
 As the young merlin, when he first takes flight,
 The uncredited wing whirrs aimless ; this side, now,
 Stoops dubiously, now that ; his ways, his bourne,
 Wists not, nor potencies ; till, timely taught
 By faulteous circlet and shrewd fall, just scope,
 Firm trust in the unvacuous air, life's field
 Henceforth to be, full-yearred, his total skies
 Measuring in glance immense, with sternest plume
 Strained steadily through one pauseless, pulseless flight,
 He rounds ; or, augur-like, from end to end,
 Pages the parted firmament. So with him
 Contemplative of work at last matured,
 His eye's dark ball grew greater with delight,
 And darker, as he viewed the things he had made ;
 Not planless, aimless not ; deep based, high reared ;
 Not men nor monsters only outside the fane
 Grinning and howling ; but a holy group
 Shown shrined within, before seraphic forms,
 Embodied thoughts of worship, wisdom, love,
 Joining their fire-tipped wings across the shrine
 Where his heart's relics lay, and where were wrought
 Upon men's minds immortal miracles.

STUDENT. Poems outlive religions, nay than some
 Better they are, and lovelier far than most.
 The poet's pen, the true divining rod
 Trembling towards feeling's inner founts, brings forth
 To light, to use, the sources many and sweet
 We have, of beauty and good in our own deep bosoms.
 But what if it be true that all is God ;
 Worship, the passive sympathy of parts
 Atomic with the mightier, active mass,
 As might a foam drop worship the great sea ;
 All deities mere abstractions of man's mind,
 And ultimate moral laws impersonate ?
 I hold my revelation in myself,
 Of the God within me, sacred and supreme.
 And for the law moral, humane, believe
 He truest is of men whose thoughts are highest,
 Whose wishes noblest, purest, charitablest ;
 Whose acts embody most both wish and thought.
 Ill deeds who doth, in such incarnates hell,
 By his own will. In our own brain or heart,
 The magic circle lies wherein we raise
 Sprites, good or bad. With our own blood, it is,
 We pour libation to forbidden powers ;
 Or satisfy with expurgative fires,
 Fed from the fuel of unbounded grief,
 The offended God within us. Life's great laws,
 The world is based upon, inviolable,
 By us, and to us holy, he who makes
 Breaks never. This my creed, I hold he most

Believes, who only God believes ; all else
Is superstition.

FESTUS. More than this is true,
And more is needed. Freedom not alone
Is worthy of worship ; souls most one with heaven
Less, may be, glory in liberties than laws.

STUDENT. Man's mind is like the moon, whose crescent orb
Tops yonder hill ; the vastier volume dark ;
But 'tis not that which grows ; the virginal light
At first but just enough to affirm its life,
With total and resistless ray, at last
Subdues the obscure sphere ; so reason wins
From faith her shadowy world ; and knowledge hoards
What ignorant belief hath lost for aye.
Relate his purpose summarily.

FESTUS. Why thus.

HELEN. I have been quite waiting for an eloquent pause
In my instructors' speeches ; gained at last.
So now then, I shall ask myself to sing,
And granting I agree to my request,
I think you ought to thank me.

STUDENT. But not now !

HELEN. Oh, yes, this instant.

FESTUS. Angh't thou lik'st of love.

STUDENT. Something about love ; and it can't be wrong ;

For love the sunny world supplies

With laughing lips and happy eyes.

FESTUS. And 'twill be sooner over.

STUDENT. And so better.

HELEN. Like an island in a river,
Art thou my love to me ;
And I journey by thee ever,
With a gentle ecstasie.
I arise to fall before thee ;
I come to kiss thy feet ;
To adorn thee and adore thee ;
Mine only one, my sweet !

With the morn I haste to woo thee,
Through the day I seek thy side ;
With the eve I'm constant to thee,
As the moon is to the tide,
So my life in gliding by thee,
Seems its purpose to fulfil ;
To behold thee, and be nigh thee,
And thine image bosom still.

And thy love hath power upon me,
Like a dream upon a brain ;
For the loveliness which won me,
With the love, too, doth remain :
And my life it beautifieth,
Though love be but a shade,
Known of only, ere it dieth,
By the darkness it hath made.

A most lugubrious end ; I hope that song,
'Tis thine, was not addressed to me.

STUDENT.

Resume.

The king who ruled the demons, ruled the powers
Of air, ruled angels, was by woman ruled.

FESTUS. All great lays, equals to the minds of men,
With the divine deal ; have for end some good
Commensurate of the soul, some scheme of being
To illustrate ; this, God's great world-drame to sum,
Prophetically. Mind, this world's, and soul, God's
The wise man here joins, orderly, all he can.
Mid lesser lays stand, as among village cots
Churches, these works high, holy, whose sanctity
Crowns them as gold cross minster dome, and shows,
As with that instonement of divinity,
The whole belongs to God. Joy 'tis to know
However state, or soul, in creed might err,
Mind's greatest works done e'er to God, as hand's ;
So, hallowed shown, to him, man's loftiest thought,
And might's sublime humility. One bard
Shows God as he deals with kings and states, war-ruled ;
One as inaugurating an empire's sway ;
As with the first man this ; this, as with heaven,
Earth, hell, and fires remedial ; ours, one soul
Forechosen, man's ultimate, with whom all time,
Earth's universal race and life sphere end ;
One soul, one statued mind, one naked heart,
Emblemed ; creative and created mind
Shown allwhere interactive ; this though yielding
In mediate trials, triumphing o'er the last
Temptation, testful ; being, at one with God.
All points are central to the infinite.
Therefore it is that deity, which fills
The spheres, unnumbered save by him who made
The space existent whole, one human heart,
With equal power and specialty inspires.
His aim being spiritual most, the bard would tell
How the soul stands with God, and the unseen
Realities round us all ; our angel kin,
And spheres of heavenly life ; the mind-made world,
Without, within ; part, earthly. Other bards
Man dressed in manners, customs, forms, and laws,
Time, place, appearance, countless accidents
Of peace or polity draw ; to him these are not ;
'Twas his to show, whate'er his doubts, sins, trials,
However earth-born pleasures soil man's soul ;
What power soe'er he gain of evil, still,
That not alone till death time is, but heaven
Stands open day and night to spirit and man,
Ever ; for all are of God's race, and have
In themselves good. The life-writ of a heart,
Whose firmest prop and highest intent, the hope

Proffered of serving God as poet-priest ;
 And the belief that he would not put back
 Love-offerings, though brought to him by hands
 Unclean and earthy even as fallen man's
 Must be ; and most the thankful manifest
 Of his high power and goodness, in redeeming
 And blessing souls that love him, spite of sin,
 And their old worldly strain, these are the aims,
 The doctrines, truths, and staple of the story.
 What theme sublimer than all soul being saved ?
 Though it is not moral standards most, the bard
 Is called to inculcate, such designs pertain
 To other ministries, the law of life
 His all-comprising province, yet he errs,
 Who, faithful maybe to his higher end,
 Unites not both in one symmetric plan,
 Lofty and plain and pure as are the skies ;
 All forms resolving to one element.
 Our world-man's life,—the model of all men, he
 All in his fate involving, friends, loves, foes,
 As draws the sun his children, circling round
 Heaven's infinite, to his own eternal end ;
 Being moralled wholewise, thus, and even in parts,
 Which, though to careless eyes, like the winged stones,
 Air-travelled, now on Saronian downs, convolved,
 And in primæval mystery, still, to eye
 Trained worshipfully, reveal a holy use,
 And meaning of a temple reared to God ;
 While in all life's scenes and sections that is found
 Which aiding thought of him, him whom the more
 We obey and love, the nigher to are we drawn,
 As by attraction spiritual, and growth
 Of divine gravity, whereby the soul,
 Though on things' outmost verge, elects to seek
 Its central reason of being, all-where diffused,
 Shows all that's good is deathless, as of God.
 For the world tells us manifestly of him,
 As of my soul, flesh ; so our imperfectness
 Proves his perfection ; our atomic life,
 His orb'd totality of being. This told
 For man's behoof in these and ultimate times,
 The bard with eye foreviewing gifted, shows
 Instructive, how God reconciles to himself
 All being.

STUDENT. By purifying from ill all worlds ?
 I would not ask thy meaning, but that I know
 Thy even lighter words have in them couched
 Not rarely a double value ; and much convince
 Of secret sanctity, like a golden toy
 Mid beauty's orb'd bosom ; speak thy thought.

FESTUS. Too oft have holiest bards defiant Ill
 Successful shown 'gainst God. Ours, truelier taught

Holds not the Omnipotent self-doomed to succumb
 'Neath evil and imperfection, sin, woe ; serfs
 By him so made for ends sealed in their birth.
 But, as when artist, skilled in feats of fire,
 The mother-city of an empire shows
 How, though heart-sick for slaughtered sons, she still,
 May gladden her in the peace their swords have wrought :
 The mimic comet at his signal soars
 To invade the upper sphere ; and streams of fire
 Blood-dyed, shot east and west, speak war, until
 Tumultuous founts of flame, erewhile immasked,
 Flare triumph to the stars ; then, with weird art,
 He bids the skies shed showers of golden rain,
 Of wealth pacific proof, or sheaves of light
 Drop their bright grain ; token that while the rich
 Reap, e'en the poor may glean life's goods ; or, roots,
 Instant in air, a palm whose glittering cones
 Seem culled by hand celestial, fruits of peace,
 As peace of victory ; street, spire and dome,
 With fire-jets gleam, in lines of lengthening light,
 Vibrant, by playful gusts chased ; soothed in soul,
 The night-thronged nations thunder their applause.
 So he, heaven's war divine 'gainst falsest hell ;
 God's conquest o'er Ill's ravenous hosts ; and grace,
 And peace triumphant celebrates for man,
 Now deathless, qualified for heaven by good.

STUDENT. And all begins and ends, thou sayest in heaven !

HELEN. So gracious the bard's plan.

FESTUS. Yes, even as one

Who sacring first his touch with waters blessed,
 Some stateliest minster entered, breast and brow
 Glistening with holy dew, from aisle to aisle,
 Here, overshot with raftered sunbeams, there
 With gorgeous lights begloomed, strays reverent ; all
 Its spatial vastness, all its wonders notes ;
 Arches of aspiration and command ;
 Columns and carved curves which end, but seem
 While ending blending with infinitude ;
 Shrines and miraculous treasures, relics heired
 From tutelar saints, ascended now ; views wrought
 Immarmorate on the wall, the angelic poise
 Of souls, earth's last assize ; or, floorwise traced,
 Boundless, indevious as a law of God,
 Her long degree of light, her beam in heaven,
 Mid sistering spheres itinerant ; knees the slab
 Luminous with gold aërial and all dyes
 Oriel or rose transfuse in jewelled squares,
 And gems gigantic as of paradise,
 Imaginary, immortal ; nether crypt
 Spectral, shrinks not to unnight ; nor risen, abhors
 On prayerful knee, to scale sin-loosening stair,
 Thrice sacred ; or with penitent foot o'erpace,

Bequest of sterner faith, its mystic maze,
 A knotted league in length ; but, led, at last,
 By many a winding step to the roof high spired,
 Glimpses with thanks, the skies, and air unvalled,
 Unincensed air, breathes gladliest ; so, man's soul
 Time-travelled, all its hallowed wanderings o'er,
 In the infinite presence ends of deity,—
 The bard shows.

STUDENT. Heaven's the birth of spirit ; the world
 Passing, preparative only in its kind.
 We are but here the multiples of men,
 Like seeds of thought and transient words of chance
 Which, buried in the mind for days and nights,
 Live to revive, and fructify in dreams
 Of infinite power and import ; the round world
 We act in, shall itself but barely seem
 To the soul a faltering reminiscence ; seem
 Like a base thought across a cloudless prayer,
 Which ruffles it, not annuls ; and lo ! the great
 Artist, whose pictures live, expunges earth,
 And on his easel there dawns another heaven.

HELEN. These things to think of, life nobilitates.

FESTUS. The sun, we may affirm, is dead and gone
 For ever, and may swear he will rise no more ;
 The skies may put on mourning for their god,
 And earth heap ashes on her head ; but who
 Shall keep the sun back, when he thinks to rise ?
 Where is the chain shall bind him, where the cell
 Shall hold him ? Hell he would burn down to embers ;
 And would lift up the world with a lever of light,
 Out of his way ; yet know ye 'twere thrice less
 To do thrice this, than keep the soul from God.
 O'er earth and cloud and sky and star and heaven,
 With God it 'bides, uprisen as is a prayer.
 O'erwearied with life's feints, and vain pursuits,
 As some dim starlet, lost in maze of strange
 Systems, retreats to heaven's securer depths,
 Where luminary create hath never beamed,
 So, indigent only of pure rest, the soul
 Seals and secretes itself in deity.

HELEN. Hush !
 Now lest we talk of nothing else all night,
 I'll to my music. Sweet one, yes, I come.
 Art thou not glad to see me ? What a time
 Since I have touched thine eloquent fingers, white
 As eminent ripples upon an elfin sea
 Of sound. Hast thou forgot me ? mind ! know'st not
 My greeting ? Ah ! I love thee. Talk, you two,
 Never heed me. I shall not you.

STUDENT. Agreed !

HELEN. By the sweet muse of music, I could swear
 I do believe it smiles upon me. See it,

Full of unuttered melodies, like a bird,
 Articulative of sweetest notes, that seem
 From each other globed as musical droplets strung
 On a string of silence,—beating time with wing
 Strained heavenward, now,—now, slowly, groundwards sloped :
 Rich in invisible treasures, like a bud
 Of unborn sweets, and thick about the heart
 With ripe and rosy beauty, full to trembling.
 I love it like a sister. Hark ! its tones ;
 They melt the soul within one, like a sword
 Albeit sheathed, by lightning. Talk to me,
 Lovely one ; answer me thou beauty.

STUDENT.

Hear her !

HELEN. What said ye, sing again ? Your kindness well
 Merits the raptures you are doomed to enjoy.

The rose is weeping for her love,
 The nightingale ;
 And he is flying fast above,
 To her he will not fail.
 Already golden eve appears ;
 He wings his way along ;
 Ah ! look, he comes to kiss her tears,
 And soothe her with his song.

The moon in pearly light may steep
 The still blue air ;
 The rose hath ceased to droop and weep,
 For lo ! her love is there.
 He sings to her, and o'er the trees
 She hears his sweet notes swim ;
 The world may weary ; she but sees
 Her love, and hears but him.

FESTUS. So to the flower of perfect life the world,
 Sings the eternal spirit ; drinks its divine
 Perfume, and comforts it with fluttering wings.

STUDENT. That roses weep, is a botanic fact ;
 A zoologic truth, that birds woo flowers.

HELEN. 'Tween truth and fact, a world-wide difference lies ;
 Earth is a fact, but heaven, oh heaven, is truth.

FESTUS. The spirit speaks of God in heaven's own tongue,
 No mystery to those who love, but learned,
 As is our mother-tongue from him, the parent,
 By whom first fashioned, flesh and spirit, all forms
 Of truth, and feelings of all kinds of beauty,—
 Moral and natural, in our heart-clay stamped,
 Burn with celestial pattern. It is in love,—
 Earth midway sphered 'tween love and war, war's part
 In poesie played, our bard hath most his work
 Love's heart-book made, and made well nigh all grief ;
 For the heart its truest likeness leaves in love's
 O'erwhelming sorrow, which burns up and buries,
 Like to the eloquent impress left, nor lost,
 In ashes, of Pompeian maiden's bosom :
 With love divine such blent. Though thin, though fleet

Our thoughts of God as ghosts, our thoughts of men
 As men, bold, yet the ideals personate,
 The shadowy creatures youth dreams live in the world
 Embodied, but invisible, save in mind's,
 The mightier, lack not ; names believed, beloved,
 Of beauteous souls all saved, which stand, perchance,
 Who knows ? for the heart's desires made pure in heaven.

STUDENT. How is't the world so falls below our hopes ?

HELEN. The world ! 'tis a forged thing, and hath not got
 God's die upon it ; 'twill not pass in heaven.

STUDENT. I might believe thee, and remain still proof
 Against all soothsayers.

FESTUS. Pray now, cease, Ye twain
 Jar ever ; even, as with two bickering swords,
 Concurrence makes not harmony.

STUDENT. Nay, I yield.

HELEN. Oh I could stand and rend myself with rage
 To think I am so weak, that all are so.
 Mere minims in the music made from us,
 While I would be a hand, to sweep from end
 To end, from infinite even to infinite,
 The world's great chord. The beautiful of old
 Had but to show some god had been with them,
 And their worst fault to their best deed was hallowed.
 That was to live. Could we uproot the passed,
 Which grows and throws o'er us its chilling shade,
 Lengthening each hour, and darkening ; or could we
 Plant where we would the future, and make flourish,
 'Twere to live, too. Enough, it seems, the present,
 All weighed, to endure. The city of the passed
 Is in ruins laid ; its echo echoing walls
 At a whisper, fall : the coming's not yet built,
 Nor laid even its foundations ; rather seems it,
 Like the air-city, goodly and well-watered,
 The dry wind dreams of on the sand, and dies
 Wandering round it, and maundering ; we, our homes
 Imaginary, cool courted, with alcoves
 And fountains dropping in the noonlight, there
 Waiting us, madly eye, and rave, and perish ;
 Not seeing the desert present is our end.

FESTUS. End darkest have the brightest natures oft.

STUDENT. Let us not speak so ominously ; but while
 We live, work out our natures. We can do
 No wrong in them ; they are divine, eterne.
 I follow mine attraction, and obey
 Nature as earth does, circling round her source
 Of life and light, and keeping true in heaven
 Her path, if perfect not in round. What is ?

FESTUS. True ; no prognostics, or we close our night
 Too sadly, and go sleep, and dream of deaths.

STUDENT. Dreams are mind-clouds, thought-forms, unshapen
 and high,

Or but God-shaped, like mountains, which contain
 Much and rich matter, oftentimes not for us
 But others' conscience, dreams being rudiments
 Of the great state to come.

HELEN. But what's a dream
 Of death? Is that all? Well, I too have had,
 What all methinks have once at least, in life—
 A vision of the region of the dead;
 It was the land of shadows: yea, the land
 Itself was but a shadow; and the race
 Which seemed therein were voices, thoughts of forms,
 And echoes of themselves. And there was nought
 Of substance seemed, save one thing in the midst,
 A great red sepulchre—a granite grave;
 Upon whose carven floor, and sides, inscored
 With guise of things not known to breathing wight,
 (Shapes of extinguished constellations, signs
 Of flying fire-drake, sheathed in the iron down
 Of demon wings, or medalled as with scales
 Of flaked and flattened meteors; or, mislinmed
 With endless curves maze-wise, like that pale slab
 The Morbihan Main, in prehistoric tomb
 Hill-isled, secretes inconstruable,) there lay
 A ghostly skeleton from whose jaws, decaying
 Ever; its only sign of life its dying
 Continuously, the shades were born; some bright;
 And these went upwards heavenly; dark were some;
 And those, born dark, grew darker and remained.
 A land of change, yet did the half things nothing
 That I could see; but passed stilly on,
 Taking no note of other, mate or child;
 For all had lost their love when they put off
 The beauty of the body. And as I
 Looked, I began to dream it was a dream;
 The grave before me presently backed away,
 And I rushed after it: when the earth quaked twice;
 Opened and shut, like the eye of one, convulsed.
 Then shut to with a shout. The grave was gone.
 And in the stead there stood a gleed-like throne,
 The ghostlings shook to see, and swooned; for there,
 Strange shapes were standing, loaded with long chains,
 The links whereof were fire, waiting the word
 To bind and cast the shadows into hell;
 For Death the second sat upon that throne,
 Which set on fire the air not to be breathed.
 And as he lifted up his arm to speak,
 Fear preyed upon all souls, like fire on paper;
 And mine among the rest, and I awoke.

STUDENT. By Hades 'twas most awful.

FESTUS.

Pray to avert

The augury of such visions.

STUDENT.

But I too,

Have dreamed strange things beyond the mind's clear grasp,
 Beyond life's limits and the term of time,
 And star-lamped palace of eternal night.
 I dreamed time's system ended, like a day
 Of celebrant victory rounded with a roar
 Of jubilant thunder, which subsides at last
 Into emphatic silence ; and the soul
 Which had outlived the great creative week,
 Those seven fair days the Pleiades of time,
 Whereof if one be lost, 'tis lost in heaven,
 Was rising from the ashes of the sun,
 Assured of its divineness, to enjoy
 Birth upon birth of glory and delight ;
 When lo !—a skiff upon a sea of fire,
 Wearily ploughing, crossed my vision's disk ;
 And straight it changed for ever and was nought.
 And as I gazed upon the lucid void,
 All things reframed themselves before mine eyes ;
 And looking up aloft I heard in heaven
 Young fluent Time discoursing of the worlds,
 With starry diagrams on night's black board,
 Most learnedly to many a lovely Hour,
 Who fain would have delayed to hear him out ;
 While wise Eternity sat by and smiled,
 Waving them all away.

FESTUS. And Time though now
 Old, withered, bald, still prates of them as I
 Have heard him, his young Hours, his lilled loves ;
 And still his mighty mother, in serene
 Maturity of beauty, sits and smiles ;
 The infant dotard's inexperienced age
 Sublimely pitying ; for well she knows,
 Though time and life are both of dual kind,
 And men and things now sacred and profane,
 Yet in the coming all shall holy be ;
 And the calm world reflect the One divine.
 Peace is the end of all things, tearless Peace ;
 Who by the immoveable basis of God's throne,
 Takes her perpetual stand ; and, of herself
 Prophetic, lengthens age by age her sceptre.
 The world, like a lion disembruted, rid
 With rose-wreathed reins, by a childling in some isle
 Enchanted, shall be subject yet to love,
 Earth's lord transforming all, he, unsuspect.

STUDENT. I shall be swift to read.

FESTUS. Yes read and learn
 A hearty thanksgiving for blessings here ;
 The proud prediction proved of life, to come ;
 Love, holiness, future bliss unlimited ; learn
 To view in nature deity all diffused.
 Her study ; and with earth's purest elements
 Mingle thy being ; sworn suitor for the smile

She pays all love with ; nor, until thine eye,
 Hallowed by sympathy with her in all shapes
 Fleeting or fixed, and every changeeful mood,
 Conceive her spiritually, believe thou aught
 Knowest, or canst ; this conscious of, with heart
 Loyal and reverent to the inmost soul,
 And onemost cause of things, live blessed. For this,
 The world hath said its say, for and against ;
 And after praise and blame cometh the truth.

STUDENT. And of all truth, the most we prize we learn
 From poesie, faculty inborn, except
 From God derived not.

FESTUS. This condition add :
 That as lauds attract the largesses of heaven,
 As gifts God's bounties, purity his saints ;
 So genius owes to his twin brother, toil, of fame,
 And so called inspiration, most. As when
 In planning some steel-rutted road, long years
 Dreamed of,—where now the fire-horse ramps, steam-breath'd,
 Sweating red coal-drops on his panting path,—
 The deep-eyed engineer his level lays
 Inscrutable, and anon, the hills with men,
 Brood of his brain swarm ; black, unbottomed moss,
 And willowy dale with mattock gleam and axe ;
 Or rock-hills, cleft as with a giant's club,
 Groan loud ; but stealthily, and reach on reach,
 The mighty work, elongating itself,
 Glides dragon-like, nor,—save in litheliest curves,
 Flexed, gracile, as the lines meridian heaven
 Hath clustered polewards,—swerves ; till o'er the sea,
 Victor by hill and chasm, broad stream and plain,
 Cloud-plumed its iron-brow towers high, at last
 With head works of all nations ranked ; so here,
 His primal plan for others' weal, our bard,
 Made wise by grief's infallible instinct, knew
 Must grow in gradual grandeur, till by toil
 Inevitable of art complete, man's calm
 Approof it conquer ; and by conquering serve.
 'Tis the soul's long service manwards, and toward God,
 Which hath alone his inbreath, and is rendered
 To him from those he worthy makes to worship ;
 Who kneel at once to him, and at no shrine,
 Save in the world's wide ear, do they confess them
 Of faults all truths, through which, as the world follows,
 He heareth and absolveth ; for the bard
 Speaks but what all feel variously within
 The heart's heart ; and the sin confessed, absolved,
 Is done with, and for ever. Bards, to God,
 The almighty poet of the world, confess ;
 And they to whom it is given with holy things
 To deal thus, and such privilege high partake,
 Life individual with life's lord enjoy,

Uplifted o'er the vast and markless mass ;
 Yet not into a sphere of selfish thought,
 But of innate and infinite commune
 With all creation ; for, as distance rules,
 Behold the stars are suns, the sun a star ;
 So they who near God, boundless hold his love ;
 Who far off lie, misdoubt it almost nought.
 And I who hold the clear and flawless faith,
 Ancient and universal in the spheres,
 Know earth was ta'en out of heaven's starry side,
 And both blessed. Therefore am I joyful, here.
 In the far to be our heirdom glitters.

STUDENT. Say,
 Thy friend, was he much seen of the world ?

No, truly.

FESTUS.
 Too oft men look on all who live askance.
 Were he a cold grey ghost, he might have honour.
 Nor thought he of himself save as a ghost,
 Who sees in night his day. For the true bard,
 And genius those most haunts who loneliest are,
 In life and in desire, crowds never ; knows,
 Nay, makes himself inevitably, ghostlike ;
 He lives from men apart ; he wakes and walks
 By nights, he puts himself into the world
 Above him ; and he is what but few see.
 No peace, choice, chance is his of happier being,
 Till his secret told, the occult hoard he show.
 Yet seeks he none, save of his own dear blood ;
 Lets generations pass, till his like turns up ;
 Nor him, unless with reverence brave bespoke,
 Thinks fit to infeoff, his heir : for knows he not
 He only, to that old hid treasure, truth ?
 And the world wonders shortly how some one
 Hath come so rich in soul. It little dreams
 Of the poor ghost that made him. Each this spirit
 Receives, transmits. But while inventive soul
 The bearings and the workings of all things
 Around, knows more than other ; knows all ends
 Of nature meet and fit ; wit, wisdom, worth,
 Goodness and greatness ; to sublimity
 Beauty approachful ; and his purpose seems
 But hesitantly to reach, he to himself
 Lives in thought, secularly ; as a planet world
 Labouring slowly seemingly up the void,
 But with infinite pace to immortal eyes, and knowing
 Who means the bard's great functions, must not sole
 Be as nature perfect, but in art perfect ;
 And himself measuring 'gainst pure mind, and high
 Extolled above himself, will seek some theme
 Where spiritual element most majestic shows,
 All covering, not all constituting ; thought
 Enkindling, as in some conflagrant wood,

By lightning fired, or swept by hurricane's feet,
 With whirlwinds winged, bough chafe bough, till all burn,
 Like heaven's star-written prophesies : thus, conceive ;—
 Time, shattered shadow of eternity, cast
 On the troubled world as the sun shows brokenly
 Upon wavelets, time, but a second to the dead,
 Had seen elapse unconscious many an age ;
 And the reek o' the world's great burning, o'er the skies
 Trailed, was fast wearing into air away ;
 When a saint stood before the throne, and cried,
 Blessèd be thou, Lord God of worlds that are,
 Have been, and are to be ! for infinite like
 With thy creation, their destruction, wise,
 Just, thou, in both,—Give me a world. God gives ;
 And the world was. How this new orb was made,
 Show : where it shone ; who ruled, abode therein,
 Worshipped, and loved ; their natures, duties, hopes ;
 Let it be pure, wise, holy, beautiful.
 If otherwise not, so made by stress of heaven,
 Kindly forced good ; we have had enough of sin
 And folly here to embrace even change of chains.
 Show God as fatherlike, going thither mildly ;
 All blessing, cursing none ; no need for those,
 That he shall come in glory new to himself,
 With light whereto the lightning's shall be shadow,
 And the sun's, sadness ; borne on a car self-teamed,
 High wheeled, of burning world, within whose rims
 Whole hells glow ; and beneath whose course dry up
 Like drops of dew, the starlets faint, of space.

STUDENT. It is a theme I want. What theme remains ?

FESTUS. One that shall start and struggle within thy breast
 Like to a spirit, in its tomb at rising,
 Rending the stones, and crying ' Resurrection ! '
 What theme remains ! Thyself, thy race, thy love,
 All sanctified, the faithless, and the full
 Of faith in God ; thy race's destiny. Know
 Every believer is God's miracle.
 Blend all in one great holy work, which first,
 A handful of eternal truth, shall men
 A heartful, after, make ; bid bury with them :
 Fair hands shall turn, idolatrous, and bright eyes
 Sprinkle their sparkles o'er it with their tears.
 The young, gay, brave shall seek 't with joy ; the old
 Still hearty in decline, whose happy life
 Hath blossomed downwards like the purple bell-flower,
 Closing the book shall utter lowly ; death,
 How little ! 'tis life in God that's infinite.
 Believe thou art inspired, and thou art.
 Behold the bard. He is wont to make, unite,
 Believe ; the world to doubt and part and narrow
 That he believes he utters. What the world
 Utters, it trusts not. Pray we, time may come,

When all who would raise men's minds may be God inspired
To utter truth, and feel like love for men.

STUDENT. One thing I'd know, thy friend's faith.

FESTUS.

Ah ! I see.

Though cognizant of his temper, culture, taste,
We know not what a man is, till we know
What he believes ; that known, all's well-nigh known.
Well, this is what his faith was, faith in God.
It was right enough to ask. Thou art as one
Who roaming haply lands remote, arrived
At some strange gated city, whose domes and spires
While yet far off have piqued his spirit to learn
Its fabulous passed, its legendary renown,
Its present life, its people's exploits, tasks, toils,
Their haunts of pleasure, halls of science, art,
By pencil fine or chisel glorified,
The abodes of learning, catacombs of wit
And seminaries of thought he paces ; scans
Their courts of sacred justice ; tribunal, throne,
Senate ; treads, pleased, the proud embattled keep
Of princely governance ; and yet longs,—all these
Seen, seen !—to view God's children at their best ;
And mark how high their flood of thought devout
Hath borne them up in their chief shrine of old,
By them prededicate to Divinity ; mind
Made holy, needs, seeks deity most ; so there,
Ingliding stilly, with the vespering sun,
Through curtained porch, the sanctuary within,
Welcomed by looks none but devout or kind,
He kneels ; thanks heaven for hourly mercies ; pleads
For a blessing upon those he loves, afar
Or near ; and thus with brethren worshipping
One Father, feels, whate'er their social claims
Art-wise, or civil, on man's just sympathies
Fraternal, spiritual, men each other know
Through fellowship best in God. But what his creed
I scarce dare say, so simple and brief it seemed ;
But as heaven high, as earth broad, it embraced
All souls of men.

STUDENT. Poets, I think, henceforth
Are the world's best teachers ; mountainous minds, their heads
Are sunned, long ere the rest of earth. I would
Be one such.

FESTUS. It is well. Burn to be great.
Each mountain stands inspired as touching heaven.
But pay not praise to loftiest things alone.
The plains are everlasting as the hills.
Revere God's order everywhere. And now,
Thou hast heard thus much from one not wont to give
Nor seek advice, remember whatsoe'er
Thou art as man, suffer the world ; 'twas thus
God made ; entreat it kindly, and forgive.

They who forgive most shall be most forgiven.
 Dear Helen, I will tell thee what I love
 Next to thee ;—poesie.

HELEN. What ! can there be
 Aught even second to me in thy love ?
 Doth it not distance all things ?

FESTUS. Sooth to say,
 I once loved many things ; ere I met with thee,
 My one blue break of beauty in the clouds,
 Bending thyself to me as heaven to earth.
 Even now 'tis variable, this love. To-night,
 It is, as thou seest : to-morrow—

HELEN. Well ?

FESTUS. Oh, nothing.

HELEN. Mine, too, moonlike may seem to lessen or grow,
 Because not visible all at once. But felt
 Trulier by me in inmost consciousness,
 It knows no night, nor morrow, like the sun.
 Unchangeable even as space, it still shall be
 When yon bright suns, in time's great hour-glass, what
 But sands ? are run out.

FESTUS. Without woman, man's
 But half man ; and as idolators their gods
 Heavenless, we deify first what we adore.

STUDENT. It is not idolatry life looks most for now.
 There's work at hand, which, not achieved, I'd look
 Simply on life as keeping me from God,
 Stars, heaven, and angels' bosoms. I lay ill :
 And the dark hot blood pulsed, plunging through and through me.
 They bled me and I swooned ; and as I seemed
 To die, a soft sweet sadness seized my soul,
 That made me feel all happy. But my heart
 Would live, and rose and wrestled with the soul,
 Twining around it as a snake an eagle,
 Which stretched its wings and strained its strength in vain.
 Mine eyes unclosed anon, and I looked up,
 And saw the sweet blue twilight and one star,
 One only star in heaven, I felt I had been
 Quite near to, hoveringly ; and then I wished
 I had died and kept to it ; but, my pulse revived,
 Was glad I lived to love life once again.
 And so our souls turn round upon themselves
 Like orbs upon their axles ; what was night
 Is day ; what day, night ; God will guide us on ;
 Body and soul, through life and death.

HELEN. Our life
 Is comely as a whole ; nay, something more ;
 Like rich brown ringlets, with odd hairs all gold.
 We women, have four seasons, like the year.
 Our spring is in our lightsome girlish days,
 When the heart within us laughs for simplest joy ;
 Ere yet we know what love is, or the ill

To be loved by those we love not. Summer is,
 When loving and beloved, we double our life,
 And seems short; from its very splendour seems
 To pass the quickliest; crowned with flowers it flies.
 Autumn, when some young thing with tiny hands,
 Cheeks rosy and bright, and flossy tendrilled locks,
 Is wantoning about us day and night.
 And winter is, when these so loved, have perished,
 If we ourselves depart not ere that time,
 For the heart ices then. And the next spring
 Is in another world, if such world be.
 Some miss one season, some another. This
 Shall have them early, and that late; and yet
 The year wear round with all as best it may.
 There is no rule for it; but in the main
 It is as I have said.

FESTUS. My life with thee
 Is like a song; and the sweet music thou
 Which doth accompany it.

STUDENT. Tell me, did thy friend
 Write aught beside the work thou tellest of?

FESTUS. Nothing.
 Thereafter, like the burning peak he fell
 Into himself, and was missing evermore.

STUDENT. If not a secret, pray, who was he?

FESTUS. Who?
 I say not, I.

HELEN. Guess!

STUDENT. Nay, it is passed all guess.

XXIX.

Philosophy hath her initiates, skilled
 To measure reason's powers ; to yield and ask ;
 To steadily stand on proven truths ; nor seek
 Too much to prove ; to adjust the self poised mind
 With world necessities, and free aid extend
 To Heaven's beneficent order. Sound nor sign
 Nor graspable test is here, save grasp of mind ;
 Fixed aim to goodwards ; liberal sense of truth,
 As permeating life's various spheres ; but one,
 Identic, indivisible ; predisposed
 To assent to law, where found ; in world, or mind,
 Soul that hath once attained as some attain,
 With fateful knowledge of futurity,
 Faith, full assured that from time's crownèd womb,
 Whate'er is born, comes kingly ; and so feels,
 As by an upward sifting process, things
 All wisest, best, as God meant, must at last
 Reign, and reign permanently ; full soon perceives
 All secondary knowledge pall. To such
 Rule, rite, sign, symbol, all have ceased to fruit.
 Who knows the eternal secrets of the stars
 Hath touched the quick of all faiths ; knoweth all
 Worth knowing ; though wise faith all known transcends.

*Apartment in Mansion. FESTUS, HELEN, LUCIFER, STUDENT,
 entering. Eventide.*

FESTUS. Urge me no more.

LUCIFER. Good, I am silence self

When need be.

FESTUS. I will think of it.

HELEN. At last !

Welcome, Sir Student ; I have news for thee.

Thou art with us invited to partake

Truth's mysteries.

STUDENT. I am loyal to the bond

I hold.

HELEN. These, mental merely, claim nor rank,

Nor rivalry with such : or I were not,

Like Grecian maid and matron of times gone,

Wise as their mystic masters and like oathed,

Admitted 'mong the sacred band.

FESTUS. Our friend,

Minding him of thy longing for all light

Of knowledge, and my sovereign beauty's, here,

Hath proffered to procure us without pain

Of probatory tests, due but from souls

Less highly elate, the privileges revived,

As shown spectacular to the elect of earth,

Those who in old time holiest orgies held

Of rare and reticent wisdom, versed in lore

Of many a land ; and ritual more august

If pompless outward, owned ; and who, while creed

Of no external state, idolatrous,
 Could claim all verity, such, at least some few
 From each, might glory in ; a faith more choice,
 More perfect function, and more blessed belief
 Profess delightful ; and be justified.

STUDENT. The like it may be I acknowledge true
 Ever and now.

HELEN. Wilt therefore with us share
 This priceless privilege ?

STUDENT. Gladly ; and the more,
 As earnestly concerned with special rites,
 Less diverse in their origin than the end
 Some of us toil to extend 'mongst men, and mean,
 By earth enlightening inwardly, to achieve
 In the end, outwardly.

HELEN. Success be thine.

STUDENT. Son doubtless of the oak and rock, I'd know,
 Art thou not now initiate of the truth,
 And her great cause ?

HELEN. Say, art thou perfect ?

FESTUS. Scarce
 An answer, that, fair lady of the light.
 Our friend would learn our moral lineage. Wait.
 What kinship hast thou with thy Lord ?

STUDENT. Most near.
 God's Son was Adam, Adam's Son am I.

FESTUS. What is thy life's chief end and business, here ?

STUDENT. Born free, 'tis mine ambition most to serve :
 Serve God and man.

FESTUS. Enough : true brethren we.
 But, hear. To wisdom's lover, self-elect
 Man most to serve, and aid Heaven's best designs
 Of faith in God, and earth's best, noblest laws
 Each other must confirm, and all unite
 In crowning our humanity ; and to a soul
 Burning to view truth's light diffused o'er earth ;
 Know all good stands, in order and degree.
 Degrees there are in wisdom, without end ;
 Truth apt to all ; but to soul passed all grades,
 From all obedience to command of all,
 What rite or rule prerequisite can be ?
 His being, is the preparation claimed.
 And who so lives not as the Master lived,
 Time's great Initiate here of life divine,
 In the dry wilderness of self-denial
 Beset, it may be, by wild passions, sins
 Brutelike ; by demons, in the forms of fame
 Power, beauty, tempted ; worship, wealth ; craft ; aught
 That could the truth-pledged soul in its serene
 Progression towards God's throne, one hour deflect
 To aims base, selfish ; and who, trampling these
 Feels not God's sanction, nor the conscious worth

Of one long ministered to by angel hopes,
 Winged with the spirit of comfort from high Heaven,
 Filling the craving mind with food celestial ;
 Greater or less than Saint and Spirit elect.
 Hath nought, or most of perfect manhood, tried
 In God's soul cleansing fires, consuming sin,
 If most, and life no fulling needs, how rare !
 'Tis well ; if nought, and the aspirant fail, one test,
 One only lawed ; and lured by sensuous baits
 By lucre, luxury, worldly pomp, or power,
 Idolatrous worship, now of many a god,
 Now of but one fictitious, false, he falls
 Into that inner dark of spirit, the pit
 Of boastful ignorance, pit of trembling ; pit
 Lit only by the light of serpents' eyes
 And the sad brood of dragons watching hoards
 Of wealth imaginary as faërie gold :
 There wandering desolately. and self-condemned,
 Till renovative times bid hope revive.
 But who so rational conquereth self, how blessed !
 All that he once subdued, he now enjoys.
 Proud of his Aid, though humble in himself,
 Lion of God, he all attacks o'ercomes
 Of fascinate fraud, or fiercest force.
 A proffered throne to steal away his soul
 Into bypaths of treachery, and bewray
 The secret truth, supremely sweet, he spurns,
 Whose crown is God, perfecter he of souls.
 All souls, of God born, and the mother faith
 They are bred, and nursed in, are Heaven's citizens.
 The king hath many a hundred handmaidens,
 All sharers in his worship, of his love.
 Others may thirst to know more. I all know
 I would know. Who, I pray, can teach me truths
 More sure, choice, comforting, broadlier based, than mine,
 Of spirit divinely graduate ; being's grand
 Development upwards ; and the instructed souls
 Humane and generous judgment of the world,
 Though error fouled, by patient penitence
 Compassing peace ; by peace, perfection ? Man,
 Like some offenceful god of old debarred
 For a time the heavenly mount, his penance passed,
 Returning exile of eternity
 And cognizant of celestial kindred, friends,
 And scenes celestial, finds him further met
 With Heaven's all pardoning welcome, and this hails,
 In such alike the true and false, joy's sum,
 And seal of all felicity ; so too, know,
 This known, there is nothing much to learn beyond.
 Yet are they who would teach me more.

LUCIFER.

None knows

So much he can't know more.

FESTUS. I know not that.

HELEN. Chill not our souls with negatives.

STUDENT. Say, "I come,"

It's to be hoped, like man-gods, we'll survive.

FESTUS. Say, then, I come. These mysteries are, if truth's,
Then wisdom's.

STUDENT. Both in spirit are one.

HELEN. I long to see a spirit.

LUCIFER. Thou shalt see.

STUDENT. Ere yet the coming sun-feast, my compeers,
Grave sponsors of man's thousands, me elect
To a modest grandeur only the humble heart
Knows to use rightly ; whence long-brooded plans
Soon to be realized I for one may help
Project ; which shall astonish earth, and bless ;
Of peaceful revolution through all lands.
Not more complete subversion of all place
Our orb makes, spinning round its axis, firm,
And as a star-beam fine, than our fresh change,
Our free felicitous order, soon to be
Installed, shall bring to pass on every race
Of man ; on every realm and tribelet known ;
A world-wide change pacific ; all state powers
To one sole hand transferred, and by such use
Transfigured into peace, once and for aye
Mankind's, how bright henceforth his course ; abjured
War's waste of wealth, time, thought and life ; what swift
Advance shall mark man's unconceived career
Upon his moral orbit, purer so
Than the eternal azure earth hath tracked
From the beginning, of commutual trust,
And prospering perfectness.

HELEN. Thought such as this
Dazzles the mind ; distracts with joy.

STUDENT. But know,
Distraught one, whose fair life is as a star's,
Couchant in purple space, things mightiest most,
Originated of order, in themselves
Their due results evolve, hence all the use
Of wealth, by friends, not far remote, supplied,
Earth seems to have swallowed, nor acception signed.
Think not I have ceased to feel with the old adept,
Though he for ends impossible wrought and sought
With worldly selfishness ; nor looked passed art's
Sway o'er the world of greed ; while we who know
What riches self subdual can achieve
For others ; what vast stores of moral good,
Social and mental, wealth used widely yields,
Know he's a thrice great fool who makes not glad
In the advance men owe to simple gold.
And now nor gold nor gems earth's surface strew ;
They must be sought within. It is there Earth hides

Her choicest gifts.

HELEN. Go then, good dragon ; brood
O'er all thy secret living wealth, and plans
By golden leverage to uplift the globe
Into a loftier sphere ; nor there forget
To raise thyself.

LUCIFER. We'll not forget.

STUDENT. Farewell.

XXX.

Soul's minor mysteries shown by light of faith
None wholly false, imperfect, all : the true
No seceries hath, no ritual. But not all
Who love truth, and are brave to seek, are free
To find. Who curiously, else unprepared,
Force themselves into her presence, earth
Not ripe yet for her advent, perish ; fruit
Untimely fallen, Death's harvest home begins.
Be the first fruits holy, let us hope, to God.
One of our fair ones dreadfully quits life's field,
And he, the enthusiast friendliest, what of him ?
Precipitate as a comet when it dips
Below the undulant edge of the keen sea,
Smoothly serrate as Indian dag, he ends.
How near is utterest failure to success.
Ambitious of all excellence, he no more
Save in his life-work like the luminous shade,
Sign heavenward of earth's progress 'mong the spheres,
From the equinoctial towering high, at eve,
Lightens our orbital task : or by report
And inference, only. Ambition's hero-ends
In view, its means no longer needed, love
Nor friendship, but by ceasing, aid. The spirit
Of woe foretells, and lo ! it comes to pass.

A Rocky Promontory overhanging the Sea. FESTUS, alone.
Afterwards LUCIFER. Midnight, Moonlight.

O starry harp of Heaven, O poet's star !
To man prophetic ; since wild earth hath changed
Her astral aim, of worlds to will supreme
Attuned, and soul from death's numb hand redeemed,
Godwards ; once more, once more in thankful joy,
Through midnight's mighty silence, the divine
Vibrations of thy world-strung chords I hear.
Theirs is the strength of ages. Infant time
Smote on them playful, and the eternal toy
Decks, still, heaven's æry halls. Thou, still, unchecked,
And changeless, circlest round God's feet ; to us
Of life triumphant sign o'er sleepful death
Eternal, and necessity colleague
In pact resistless, save to spirit inspired

Of love, whereto our most of joy and grief
 We owe ; soul-testing ; sacred both. For here,
 If fate our sovran rule ; in worlds to come
 Necessity shall be thrall to us divine ;
 We homaging her each separately ; but one
 With God, collectively, her liege. So shown
 Life's full communion with its Lord, let joy,
 By his touch imparted, through thy starry strings,
 Harp of God's hand, thrill, he all creatural strains
 Ruling and rectifying to his own ends.
 Perchance, in after times, in some far sun,
 Less conscious than our serpent-coiled orb,
 Whose guilty heart, ghost haunted, leaps with fear
 At all faith's innocent spectres as they pass,
 Eyeing as now yon sacred shape, the soul
 With thy predictive legend pleased, shall view
 All Heaven rejoicing in perfection ; all
 Spheres worshipful of God ; all liberty
 Love's law whereon the world's wide walls are built,
 In harmonies based, become the law of life,
 Which all intelligence, passion-tamed shall sue
 To live consentient with, and mind supreme ;
 God's peace o'er arching nature's strife. But me
 Bright harp ! let gladden in looking on thee, more
 In this augurial, that as he of old
 Legendary, who bare thee upon his breast,
 By sweet extortion of thy starry strains,
 The Hadean powers compelled his spouse to yield,
 One moment's glimpse of life regenerate ; boon
 Of gods, disastrous, and of dim record ;
 Man yet in happier juncture, buried faith,
 His spiritual bride, by pity of deity,
 Shall show redeemed to life for aye. Could now
 Mortal, that bright feat emulate ?

LUCIFER. Thou wouldst not
 Fail, doubtless, in intent. But destiny
 As here thou hast felt, hath heavy hands, and strong
 Escapeless grasp. Well, he is sensitive
 Who can from stars comfort though cold, extract,
 And out of fables truth.

FESTUS. Each soul his star
 Of evil or good predominant hath ; but me
 All heavens betoken woe.

LUCIFER. Deeds before words.
 I half suspect I know what thou wouldst say,
 But saying soothes full oft the soul sore tried.
 Say on. I have time enough for others' dole,
 Let be mine own.

FESTUS. Bride of my heart, O woe !
 One instant see I thee both quick and dead.
 O mystery of most sad bereavement. This
 It racks me to the core. The good, wise, kind,

Why snatched away, when prized, when needed most ?

LUCIFER. Calm and command thy soul.

FESTUS.

I will. Allured

By hope-fraught promises thy words conveyed

Of revelations of the light occult,

I, long, in kind reserve, deemed fitlier hid,

We with our studious friend at his request,

Thrice urged, went forth to meet him named by thee,

Sunseer ; but whom the desolate end of all

Proved rather dread adept of darkneses.

It was the hour of stars. Spring's crescent sphere

Followed the vanishing footsteps of her lord

For that she loved the light ; 'twas eve, I said,

As thou wouldst have. I had marked the setting sun

Calling all kindred glories of the world,

All friendly royalties, earth, sea and air,

To attest his end imperial, for that they

Must likewise learn to die, who came and stood

Round his orb'd bier, death-hallowed ; came too, there,

Nature as earth's high priestess fain to skreen

The death-throes of titanic light, and drew,

From side to side of Night's vast sanctuary,

And o'er heaven's blood-dyed altar, with the fires

Flushed of faith's evening sacrifice, a veil

Celestial, of all hues, rose, amber, pearl,

Lilac, and palest green ; like a faint thought, this,

A half reluctant memory interfused

With dreams, of earth in paradise ; far round

The impurpling sea flood, fired with opaline gleams

Heaved, as though pondering every wave ; below,

Our feet, rough, ruddying crags ; the horizon barred,

As of a vizor'd enemy come to mock,

Its beams of blinding gold shot lancewise forth,

In permanent lightnings, levelled as to pierce

The dying sun-god ; high o'erhead the while

Heaven's boundless, stainless blue, star-glinting, flecked

With crimsoned featherings of night's shadowy wing,

Pure, peaceful, all consoling. Fell round us,

Now prayerful, twilight swift, and as we sped,

By wild rough windings, through a holy land

Of earliest solar worship, solemnized

In prehistoric eld, the age of fire,

They, heartfull of expectancy ; I, in aught

That might to us conduce of permanent weal,

Or wisdom, save to soul, long taught of truth,

Untrustful ; and woe's me ! how fate confirms

All saddest premonitions ; deep in thought ;

Mute, save in whispered wordlets, or mere signs,

A hill we reach, by moonrise, on whose head

Hearselike, a sable grove nodded. We mount ;

And midway the ascent, descending, strike

A foot-road, forked like a divining rod,

Whose dexter branch we track until we near
 A stone of worship, sun devote, which us
 Shrining within its shadow, struck to the heart
 A holy chill; while round its base, earth-tombs
 Crowd, waves immovable of a sea of death,
 Thee wait we long time here; and whiles, this rock
 As maenhir, still by Keltic spouse adored,
 Babeless, who oft, with lank and fawning breasts,
 In aid of hoped-for motherhood, secretly,
 At moony midnight, frets its bossy chine;
 Which rustic's eye now shuns; but most abhors
 By ghostly twilight, deeming fiend transformed,
 This rock, thrice circling we, as type of ours,
 Sun spiritual, supreme rock, hail, hand-linked.
 Thence pressing on, breathless, a dell we near,
 Wherein secreted lay, below a tall
 And rugged precipice, a glassy pool,
 Like an enchanted mirror in the breast
 Hid of a dreadful wizard, of all speech
 Disdainful, ere he prove his threatened power;
 And glowering nigh the foot of the imminent cliff
 Adverse, a cave, but late discoverable
 And, save to us, unknown. Accosted here
 By one who kept the shadow of the rock;
 In semblance favouring most the Samian Seer,
 As graven in classic gem; his pendent beard
 Parted i' th' midst; of amber hue its waves
 Like as of fluent spar, in falling caught
 Upward; and flung o'er either shoulder, curved,
 Typhonian fell, he, us receiving, back,
 As we advanced, withdrawing, heads us all
 Sagewise; and as the outer world we quit,
 A blast premonitory caused groan the groves
 O'erhead; while underfoot, more startling still,
 Earth tremblings, and choked thunderpeals, in vain
 Ejaculated just warning, at his sign;
 For who on earth long taught by wisdom, truth,
 But would, in silence most excelling, most
 Encouragingly indulge; the hour at hand
 Of seasonable discourse? We enter, each
 Passive, none hopeful, as it seemed; nor once,
 From first to last was joy a moment there,
 As one believed might be; but all severe
 Or solemn was; head bared and naked foot,
 We our hands plunged in purifying rill
 Which o'er its couch, pale alabaster, veined
 With glittering purple glode, now wade; our act
 Threefold, so intimating that not alone
 The initiate from the world, its walks, its works,
 Must pass, made pure; but soul, through defluent things
 Of time and change, must cross to things eterne,
 Substantial, spiritual, fixed. A strait anon

Jagged and dark, dragged through, we enter, crouched,
 A cave high pitched, a cave of caves involved,
 Vault after vault, outbranching without end ;
 Not that unlike bordering on the heavenly coasts,
 Where, in the sub-celestial empire, hid
 His head the offended sun ; till wooed by gods,
 And sued by men prostrate, so feign the bards
 And bonzes of Zipang, his staff of light,
 He seized, and reassumed his rolling throne ;
 An underworld abyssmal, excavate
 Of nature, but in time, by those indwelled
 Whom hall nor tower could home ; but where of old,
 If sere tradition, and what wiselier shows ?
 Err not, such time as, fire-drake of the seas,
 Leviathan ; huge Behemoth, and the Boar,
 In vain demolished, on the morrow whole ;
 Ill's choicest type, light's conqueror ; deinother,
 Dreadest of brutes, limbed oaklike ; and whose teeth
 As tombstones showed ; aurochs, and elk enorme,
 Whose antlers, than an oarsman's oars well plyed,
 Spread widelier ; mammoth huge, and mastodon ;
 (These dying, deigned not fall ; but bidding earth
 Close o'er them, and it would, grim sepulture,
 By glacial Lena, or Nerbuddah's banks,
 Or Mississippian swamps, made they, erect,
 And their own osseous monument ;) compeers
 Of animal life, held main and plain, abode,
 The prediluvian giants of the land ;
 Of race dispersed throughout earth ; and as sons
 Of angels fallen, not all unskilled to instruct
 Mankind in truth, if following most the false ;
 Among whom one, for even of giants worse
 And better were ; his people's soothsayer ;
 Spared mercifully for fitter ends to come ;
 Forewarned by the Ark-man's truly boding voice,
 And smote with shame for wrongs long since by him
 Wrought, or his race, sole penitent he, 'gainst men ;
 To mountains deeper based, and earlier snowed,
 And loftier than Ararat, earth had borne
 Heavenward, 'scaped scatheless ; and remorseful bare
 God's aqueous curse ; thence following falling floods,
 And covering continents with his stormy stride,
 Sought out mid Albion's hills, his kindred's home
 Erstwhile, his life millennial in these scenes
 Of carven prophesy, here, on man's behalf
 Wore out, and predivulged in speaking stone ;
 Each, men and giants, ignorant, that should these,
 By Thamiel taught the star-lore of the skies ;
 By Azael secrets none but he had gained
 Ineffable, all they had learned, propound, and men
 Here, on the impending wall opposed, beheld !
 Had such received ; and then, all earth's veriest truths,

By sage philosophy earned, by care and search ;
 Pure intuition toilless, preconceived ;
 Celestial inspiration, held from first ;
 Or reason, simply greater than all else,
 Led back triumphant from doubt's lessening realms,
 That God to know, is best of things ; and aught
 Of knowledge else, art, science, nothing worth ;
 Petty and paltry pilferers of man's time ;
 All human wit made useless, might, like flower
 Withered ere blooming time, have lightened never
 Out of its sheath, to adorn, our starry world.
 Wondering we stood, and still. His hands then smote
 Our Arch-mage, and the thunder of his palms
 Re-echoing palpably o'er head, a gush
 Of blinding lightnings showed us now the roof
 A glimmering void, spar starred, where travelling lights,
 Like planetary seats of social gods,
 By craft titanic fulminated into shape,
 Self-levered fabrics of artistic fire,
 Mysterious moved ; through whose bright art we read
 The awful wonders of that uneyed sphere ;
 Where, as though Nature craved to represent,
 In shows of time, eternal verities,
 That she the scions of the wise might teach
 In one vast visible lecture things to come
 Things passed, things present, here insculped were seen,
 Wrought out from primal matter, nebulous,
 As in marmoreal epic, time's career
 Imperfect, necessary, but deed by deed
 O'erruled, the marvels of the All-causal hand,
 And end of man perfectible. Here we viewed
 The first essay of force to form in laws
 Symmetric, of stability preordained
 The mountain playthings of the infant sun ;
 And in maturity his affiliate spheres ;
 Promoted or pervert in after times,
 To mind's abstractions deified, or the heart's ;
 Here, wrought in stony flames, the age of fire ;
 Earth, now, one vast volcano vomiting forth
 Her continents ; after, gradually accrete
 By moist alluvial, cloud-born ; and her seas
 Of sand ; the thunder-haunted mountains, trode
 By Time's comminutive foot to flint-dust ; now,
 Islands extemporizing in a breath.
 Grouped, there, the Preadamic races, huge ;
 By age of fire swept off, or water ; Heaven
 The world revising at the flood ; and doomed
 To swell some second chaos with their wrecks
 Sublime. Enormous and now fabulous shapes
 Cross-peopling all the elements ; winged bulls ;
 Stags star-yoked, which lead morn an endless chast
 Sad gryphon, eagle sired and lion born ;

Unslumbering goldward, jealous of all gems :
 And those commingled births whom Belus smote
 Headless, and drowned in gore ; his mission here.
 Mild rokh, simorgh, wise sun-spirit ; all these
 In converse amiable now graved, now wroth ;
 In lifelike petrifaactions crowd the walls.
 The heavenly age, the age of Paradise,
 Here glowed in gold-veined marbles, darkened sole
 By angel treason, and the fall of gods,
 Earth conscious first condoled with, and still rues.
 Here, symbolled by the thousand branchèd tree,
 From whose broad boughs hang constellated gifts
 And every wish delicious of the heart ;
 The tree of life, there, deathless ; and of all
 Create, significant ; from heaven's free air,
 To death's imprisoning roots, and hell's ; but else,
 Withered too soon ; and, here, with meteor wave
 Surging, the all-oblitative flood.
 Thereto next limned in adamantine lines
 The age of evil when unto angel hands,
 To sceptred Satael, and to Samael crowned,
 Chiefs of the original hierarchies of heaven
 And, their base compeers of the mountain oath,
 Virtue and leave were given to deluge earth
 With woes all optional ; shadow and reverse
 Of every good gift God had showered on man ;
 Now checked by pain or nullified by fine
 On every blessing. Swiftly malignant these
 Embittering every element with death,
 Taught men the lust of war, heart's thirst of blood ;
 Gave reptile, insect, herb venom ; and poured
 In earth's veins poison mineral ; neath the hills
 The motive powers of earthquakes rooted ; sowed
 Death's seeds explosive ; angered air with storms ;
 These made the hollow columns of the sea,
 And lofty as the tower of glass that rose
 Mid ocean sudden by the astounded barque
 Of Partholoin, straight helmed for Ierne's isle ;
 Those, watery pillars death-black, oft that burst
 Swollen, nigh ship becalmed on sweltering seas
 Beneath the hot line ; and ere now have quenched
 The life-light in some fugitive skiff escaped,
 Like truant cygnet from its parent sail,
 Stealthy on lawless quest ; in marble such
 Portrayed with industry malicious ; there,
 Incised in mellow Parian ; those, intent
 To teach rebellion 'gainst all law divine,
 To man and angel foes, the lightnings forged,
 He who of right owns all made, after claimed,
 Wrapped in authentic thunders, and by hands
 Angelic, Usdom wracked with the grim towns
 In salt slime sleeping neath the sea of death.

These, fell disease contagious pest and plague ;
 Here, these as teaching guileful in dark cell
 Secrete, the cruel craft of sorceries ;
 Black magic showed, and dæmon thralling spells ;
 The blood-draught necromantic, and such charms
 As fright the shadowy Nations of the dead,
 Which shuddering, flickering upwards towards the light
 Unfold the soul-sought secret, or impart
 Foreboding fatal to the wretch death doomed.
 Here, in man's heart, and woman's richer mould
 More fertile, these, all evil passions sowed ;
 Such snakelike envyings, wolflike jealousies,
 As when for love of fair Khalmanah, bride
 Of paradise, and Eden's heiress, Cain
 Him slew, since feared as Hades, god of death,
 Whom our first mother, though sin smirched, revered,
 Bewept a hundred years ; so long the dead,
 While death showed new to life and earth, was mourned.
 And here, entabed with undreamed-of skill,
 In art colossal and majestic, those
 Viewed we, to the life remoulded, who first taught
 War mace, and sword to shape, pole-axe and spear ;
 These, gems to mine, and jewels for the fair,
 Brightly seductive ; women were their spoil
 From the beginning ; and their spurious brood
 Gigantic, in whose ears apostate preached.
 That patriarch, who of God the accredited
 Ambassador to Angels, into heaven
 Translate, of death not touched, ere Noah, as yet
 With his majestic consort great Tidea,
 Queen mother of the nations, deified
 After as Vesta or Kybele, all
 Her offspring kings of earth tripartite, sought,
 God warned, the Ark, and all their living train.
 Instructed by our guide, the way who had shown
 Thus far, and led through all that followed, all
 Expounding, from the atomic seed of stars,
 To the all-conglobèd system's end, the course
 Albeit at large, not tedious, but the more
 Prolonged, the more inspiriting ; slow we passed
 Out of the hall of elements, and the obscure
 Of man's beginnings, as in nature seen,
 In art, in social severance nationwise,
 The earing-time of earth's first faiths and false ;
 Into the fane of life. Here, graven the war,
 Holy, on this side, waged twixt earth and heaven,
 On that unholy ; 'tween the pious race
 And impious tribes ; still in man's bosom-world
 Waged ever, mocks his heart ; where yet he builds
 His Babel towers to equate him in proud thought,
 With Heaven ; and shield him, vain hope, from its wrath ,
 In craggy frieze glared round the o'ervaulted roof,

Wider than any rainbow's sea-pier'd span :
 There, hundred handed vices, titan sins,
 And giant crimes ; pride heaped on pride, as hills
 On hills piled, whence un wisdom seeks to tear
 The high-throned Thunderer of the Heavens, who wroth,
 Rightly, with sin persistent, wilful, gross,
 With fiery hail hurls all to hell ; but touched
 In time, with ruth, for foes so mean, these grants
 Piacular remedies, there to undergo
 Asbestine, purifying, thrice blanchening pains.
 Here, murally confronting us, we mark,
 And marking, mourn, time's prime idolatry ;
 Earth's many godded error ; statued stars ;
 And theirs, who, prostrate on hill-tops, the sun
 Untempled, or the moon, and clustered spheres,
 Or singly wandering, worshipped ; this, when earth,
 Fairest and first apostate of the heavens,
 Through unconditioned ignorance, and the false,
 Spheres vastier than the void, or space unmoved,
 Fell, all the way from Deity to the stars ;
 Fell, maimed, but not immedicably. Here, see
 Love's earliest graven monument, and first
 Of purificative legends, from the skies
 Transcribed, soul-sacrifice of all delights,
 Powers, gifts ; Ishtar's descent, love-led, to hell ;
 Precipitate, dazzling as the star of stars,
 Through wastes celestial, seeking her beloved ;
 There Psyche's (last and loveliest of all mythes)
 Ascent, love-led, to heaven ; for man insculpt
 The bright ensample ; virtue's pilgrimage,
 Self-guided through all earth, more arduous task
 Howbeit, than those ; or all by fable feigned.
 Aurmazd and Ahriman, there, in balanced strife
 The doubtful sphere contest ; and here, in stone
 Prophetically white the conquest glad
 Of the beneficent power, as once I heard
 Methinks in heaven, or glimpsed in lifelong dream-
 Previsionary, good yet shall gain in strife
 Bloodless, the eternal field. Young Orus there,
 His sire the sun, his mother mild the moon ;
 O sacred night-sun, soul of Heaven, which through
 The starry welkin wanderest in serene
 Sorrow, commemorative of light's Lord lost ;
 Him living ne'er thou'lt find ; but lo ! thy son,
 The evil godhead Typhon slays, and reigns,
 Wise, silent child of light. Here, next the god
 Incarnate, ninefold, crushed, with sole supreme,
 To death, and strangled, with resistless hand,
 The snake-god ; holy fiction ! The Asoors, there,
 In armed millions, by the deities,
 Vanquished, draws off their whole malignant host,
 Destined some day to perish, but their end

Leave to the prescient artist to record.
 Now, towards the impending cliff-like wall, opposed,
 The plain, rock paved, between, traversed, we turned.
 Here, the divine and human wrestled ; there,
 Where faith's bright orbit reason's intersects
 The human and angelic ; time by time
 On earth permissive Deity to those
 He loves, gives leave to conquer, and retires
 Upwards, half pleased with his defeat ; there, chaired
 In starry state, sits the proud queen, condemned.
 The everlasting sacrifice to view
 Of her unguilty child, who waits with arm
 Outstretched, imploring, like humanity aye,
 The innocent for the ill, to be redeemed
 By some divine deliverer ; none shall come,
 But lord and lover ; wind-winged, lightning shod ;
 Ender of ill, slayer of sin's serpent seed ;
 The holy, and the invisible. There, with head
 Hurl'd downwards from heaven's topmost height, the king,
 Righteous, but too much glorifying of self,
 Who thought mere merit enough to earn a throne
 In God's eternal kingdom ; fatal fault !
 Wherefore, as clutching at, with either hand,
 A world, but grasping nought, unvoiced reproof
 He gives to all immortal. There, behold,
 Limned to the life, instoned in adamant,
 Prophetic of the first of prophets, called
 On Aram's plains, listening the fatherly voice,
 Commanding to adore life's spiritual Lord ;
 Who made the heaven and earth ; the eterne, the sole ;
 Which listening, Art there shews the one great act
 That cleaves with clear divisive line of light,
 Meridian wise, from end to end, time's chart
 Historic ; falsehood there, and darkness ; here,
 Truth, and divinest light ; from whose blessed day
 Of unitary belief, all prophet soul,
 Him following through the ages, now by law,
 By penitence now marked, now by grace, to the hour
 Arabia's sworded seer, and conquering scribe,
 Sweeping idolatry off one half the earth,
 The truth reestablished of God's onemostness,
 Triumphant evermore. Here, hosts terrene,
 Hosts heavenly and infernal, armed with faith
 Or infidel fury fought ; these sworn to rase,
 In ruin, cities reared by hands divine,
 Or, for divine ends ; such the goodly towers
 Truth dwells in, based on adamant ; the ancient domes
 Imperishable, where wisdom empir. holds
 Paternal, and in columned halls sevenfold
 Deals justice increate, prescriptive ; such
 They built ambitious, imitative, who Rome,
 City of cities, earth's crowned capital,

Of sway unbounded, credulous ; such the bright
 Cæropian burgh, with olive wreathed ; and that,
 God's templed city of peace, earth's joy, not yet,
 Albeit foretold oracular, verified ;
 Such sacred Troy, and every mystic site
 Song-hallowed, fountain, fig-tree, fane and all
 Apt to that holiest legend which, begun
 By discord's apple, with one all conquering steed
 Huge, rampant, ends ; such, that, gold builded, erst,
 On sceptre tridentine of Indian god,
 Men's sins degraded into stone, and now
 Debase to clay ; but still no whit cognate
 To common earth ; but of time's earliest heaven
 One unadulterate section. Those defend
 Their starry battlements ; their walls inlaid
 With purest virtues ; courts and streets and squares
 With godliest prudence paved ; prophetic these,
 And dimlier outlined, passionate prejudice show
 'Gainst patient consciousness of sacred truth ;
 Of obstinately protected sin 'gainst right ;
 Of freedom's just revolt 'gainst despotry,
 Although of premier peoples. Here the north,
 Icy, but strong in multitudinous stars
 Of strengthening virtues ; there, the burning south,
 Led by its passionate queen, contending, stood,
 In fierce and fateful fray ; death looking on,
 Well-pleased ; who else may lose, he always wins.
 Here, nation after nation fought the world,
 For universal dominance ; fought in vain.
 One sole elect of creatures, head of hosts
 Peaceful, unweaponed, save with reason's arms
 Assuasive, promise hath of that dread gift.
 All fronting, at the end, a female form,
 Gigantic, kneeled, earth's guardian, to some power
 Invisible, uncompassionate (for so deem
 Boodh's godless priests, slaves of the golden foot).
 Now interceding for its life ; but she,
 The fatal sign once given, ordaining death,
 Relentless tears the solid universe
 Asunder ; tears earth's axis from her heart,
 Quivering ; and lo ! on either side, behind,
 The final field, so feared once, to be fought
 'Twixt giants of time's dawn, from prison self-freed,
 At nature's eventide, and gods mundane ;
 Who, grasping each an element in his hand,
 Hurl, one at other, ruin ; orb 'gainst orb
 Clashing, and sun 'gainst sun, till all, with deaths
 Commutual, perish. We, our doubting eyes
 Edged upon growing blacknesses, which now
 Mute lightnings lit, in mock of light ; and blind
 Thunders now groped round. Ever and anon,
 Flitted athwart the dark what spectres seemed,

But dimly eyecable. Locked hand in hand,
 Our fair heroic, trembling 'tween her guards,
 Firm yet in spirit, even as the patriot queen
 In golden chains bound Romewards, so to grace
 Her victor's triumph, each step doomed to move
 Time's ruth, and wrong's eternal recompense,
 Nor whither more knew ours, but towards the west ;
 We all, together, pace ; then, separate, each,
 A long laborious road as seemed, but brief
 Doubtless, in substance ; until, through the gate
 Rock-arched, of this demesne now cleared, we, pressed,
 Creep, speechless ; whence emerging in a cave ;
 Not lovelier the green grot where grew young Zeus
 To stripling godhood, hid from cruel Time ;
 Nor stalactital palace, subterrene
 In Parian islet, where their unseen Court,
 As fancy feigns, the sacred Nine once kept,
 And crownless ruled o'er kingly servitors,
 More sweetly showed recondite ; more secure
 Its walls of marbled ingrowth ; we rejoin
 Each other's side and reunite our form.
 Here, for the first time othersome we meet
 Beside ourselves, all silent ; to his voice
 Still hearkening, who in face like his, and guise,
 The name of wisdom's lover firstliest claimed ;
 Heard, prime of men, heaven's spherul harmonies ;
 At Metapontum wrote upon the moon ;
 Bared at Olympian feast the golden thigh
 In proof of solar lineage ; bade, as man's
 True worship, God be imitated ; who, just,
 Beneficent, ever at unity with himself,
 Was our best pattern.

LUCIFER.

O most apt adept !

How must your leader have rejoiced to find
 Gathered in this, philosophy's inmost home,
 His novices so teachable. For the rest,
 Truth is as each one troweth. What means peace ?
 It may mean self-extinction. The next step ?

FESTUS. Listening we stood, charmed ; reassured in faith ;
 Heart-lightened, onward fared ; and following close
 The echoes of our guide's feet, in the heart
 Of a dim, dome of all but sightless bounds,
 And named of immortality, him found
 Apart, and changed in mien, less mild as seemed,
 On an arch, towered, neath which a torrent foamed,
 Red with his torch's glare, blood-like. Beyond,
 A mount of awe there loomed, which showed inspired
 With palpitant light ; that sudden came and went,
 Wilderingly ; and, thither pointing, ' lo ! the end
 Of our emprise ; ' with these words clave our guide,
 As with a sword, the silence ; then, ' who truth
 Would win, as she awaits us, in yon shrine,

Yearning the victor soul to sate with peace
 And wisdom ; and to crown, with life divine,
 Earthlife, and her embrace deific give ;
 Know, that to arms untested, hearts untried,
 She trusts, yields, nought. Let not yon seething stream,
 One, therefore, who would gain such priceless prize,
 Affright ; but let the wight content with less,
 Smile colder and more conventional embrace,
 Tread, after me, the arch.'

LUCIFER. He never could
 Have thought you half believed, what true, he taught,
 Or taught but half he knew.

FESTUS. Here quailed she first,
 Of the end too emulative, the mean unproved,
 Who never dreamed of trial aught, nor test
 And last ;—but let me pause. Our student feere
 Bolder than I, because incredulous, rid
 Not solely of superstition but mere faith,
 As God would have, plunged with me in that tide ;
 And struggled, nigh to safety. Once a prow,
 More like a raft, without all bulwark, shoal
 And with no true bilge, adrift from upper bank,
 Help promised falsely ; till, at last, a rock
 Grasping, this, loose at base, betrayed his trust ;
 And crushing, soon that death-flood hurried off
 Into earth's caverned darkness, and the abyss,
 Reverberant alway with its watery roar,
 And funeral wail perpetual ; but to me,
 Now wading, floating now, safe transit vouched,
 Though sickening to the sense ; nor wist I this
 Till, 'scaped, and scantily, from the perilous arch
 Which crumbled, as she crossed, nor left retreat,
 My love I met who saw, and fainting told ;
 Told, shuddering, like the tree whose sense of sin,
 Howbeit involuntary, the ages fail
 To calm, as weighted yet with the pendent power.
 I meanwhile, shore who had reached, heard, heard dismayed,
 Thrice called aloud his name, which to no end
 Unanswering silence sadly learned, thenceforth
 Wasted, like time upon unquickened stars.
 Scant leisure ours was for lament ; for now,
 Fiercer, and far more urgent, waxed the mien
 Of our mysterious leader, who aloof
 Held him, and hailed as careless of our loss,
 Or witless, for his countenance saw we not.
 And now, all light snatched from us, hie we on,
 We twain, I bearing up her slackening steps,
 Amid darknesses successive, each more deep
 Than other, and far thunders whence we opined
 Day, egress, nearer than they seemed ; to us
 A time of torture, but determined soon.
 And now, from out that fane of pauseful fire,

We seemed unskilled to escape from, when light was,
 And in whose quivering bosom half distent
 With smothered splendour, like the sacred side
 Of Athyr, travailing of the sun, the Light
 Blew, flowerlike, open ; and with arrowy glance
 Showed us one only feat to consummate,
 From out that lofty shrine of roseate glow
 And twixt the stops of stormy thunders, now,
 Voices and harps, and far, faint harmonies
 We list ecstatic, as though deadliest fate
 Would mask it faërywise. Here, each one's foot,
 Instinct with caution, easy seemed the ascent,
 Nor either paused, until the brink we touch,
 Unseen till lighted on, of a horrent chasm,
 Sacred in use, defensive of the fane,
 Forbidding access uninvited. There,
 But on the thither steep, our sun-seer stood,
 Who gazed that orb, nor blinked ; for on his side,
 New risen upon the season's narrowing night ;
 Sheer through a mountain fissure shone the sun
 The fane within lightening. That rocky rift,
 Clean cut, as ghastly vein, shale blue, earth's heart
 Explosive once, through granate, shot, league long,
 Now seas persistent have well breathed, and left
 Hollow, as tube twixt isle and isle that swings,
 Echoing ; clear, startling, as the iron gash
 Helm-riving, that on war fields counts for one ;
 I only bidden ; one fondly comforting sign,
 One word consolatory to her there left,
 Expressed ; leap clear ; and clearing so, clear death.
 Enter, to me he cried ; and enter alone,
 Soul that would learn truth's sum, must learn it sole.
 To her who had me accompanied, then, a seat
 In the immarbled rock assigned, he, ranged
 Beside her ; all in common silence lapsed,
 I looked, content. Truth's shrine, then, entering sole,
 Sole ; as the sun in heaven his subject sign ;
 View first mid many an arched recess, star-ringed,
 Ranked orderly, and from grade to grade of all
 Perfection ; each mysterious symbol truth
 Hath hallowed ; every teeming sign faith holds
 In old and orient imagery devote
 To sacred use, with mightiest meanings eked,
 Which wisdom worthful makes but to those wise,
 Lords of best learning ; signs which here conjoined,
 In secret state emblazoned, rayed with words,
 Divine, unutterable, soul charm by charm,
 Open, in awful gradual, till achieved
 The one sole truth which crowns all creeds, and sums.
 The thought of God is simple enough ; it is man
 Makes the world's mystery ; who, self-warned of powers
 Unlimited but for sense, cloud-lifed conceives

Beyond the impermanent skies, the eternal soul
 Of all existence, transitory, or fixed ;
 Perfect though infinite ; knows through virtue truth ;
 And as an educable divinity, schooled
 Through Being's grand gradations, loves the law,
 Of all intelligent life ; just ; bettering soul ;
 Soul-freeing, joining whole with God ; yet lives
 Doubt's thrall, and fool. This, one long instant ; next,
 Prostrate within the sanctuary, and still
 My mind the effect sublime of joy retains,
 Cleared, elevated, and sanctified by sight
 Of all faith's passed perplexities, to one
 Key yielding, in result, the one same truth.
 Great there with gladness grew my spirit, as might
 Of old some riverine god, upon his side
 Leaning complacent, on his long career
 Reflective ; foamy fall ; still, sunny reach ;
 Shoal, and bend troublous ; ere the bar which bounds
 His wave from Ocean's, he o'ersurge ; thenceforth,
 One with the all parent power ; so I, at one
 With the universal Spirit ; full, fixed content
 Of Being and satisfaction with all life
 Knew, and the oneness of all verity.
 Thus gladdening to have reached that shrine of shrines,
 Where light intelligible (henceforth the sun's
 But a shadow shown) all life illumines, I kneel
 In silent worship ; and thence rising, saw,
 On the wrought altar-rock laid gleaming, midst
 The fragrant death of flowers all hued ; and where
 Life, more than flower-life sensitive, ne'er was ta'en ;
 A volume vast, clasp closed, whose ambered sides,
 Each as a giant's corslet spacious, vamped
 In ore of Auphir, bossed with burning gems,
 Glowed ; gems which conscious seeming of just worth,
 Neath lightning-lidded eyes sense more intense
 Of virtues, veiled ; apt to each saintliest sign
 Symmetric, rayonnant with all stones of price,
 On either covering board emblazoned ; here,
 The shield of God's anointed hymnist, proof
 Of human and divine oned ; there, the seal
 Heaven lent, of wisdom's lord thrice potent, all
 The elements dominating ; soul guardant 'gainst
 All world-ill, ill demoniac. Oped, behold,
 The tome within, on azure leaves writ large
 In syllabary constellate, like night's spheres
 By spiritual hands I hailed as known, transcribed,
 From skiey archives ; every mitred thought
 Graved trophy wise for truth won ; God's great code
 Life's universal law, by will divine
 First lodg'd of angels in Heaven's sanctuary,
 The law all regulative of space and time ;
 Of mind, create imperfect ; good, and choice ;

Of evil and necessity, life and death,
 The eternal, infinite, matter, movement, force ;
 Paged these, horizonwise ; as when at light's
 First dawn, our fellow orbs, sky-circling stood
 With us conjunctive, self-aligned ; and those
 Of moral might, and indicative of truth,
 Columnar, like the vaporous bands, all tinct,
 The sun's rich elements, out of boundless space
 Skreened, and enregistered ; the heavenly rule
 Through soul-world operative, through every sphere
 Mental and spiritual penetrant ; one same law
 In all essential, and for creature's good,
 On like base, all-where, founded ; in my mind,
 This summary all which rests, this brief record ;
 Sole simple pure, the personal infinite,
 Of necessary essence, perfect, free,
 All present, good, is wise and just ; life, love ;
 Not as space passive, powerless ; nor as time,
 Subject of mere relation between deed
 And doer ; but of duration source, and sum,
 And of all causes ; founder of the skies ;
 Author of all the elements of the world ;
 Quickener of tides ; of the heart's first beat ; as sire
 Of natural life, lord of the law of growth ;
 The life of bulb and bud, of root and limb ;
 Of act instinctive in all animate tribes
 Kind instigator ; in man's kinglier race,
 Teacher of social law ; of sacred rites,
 Of family sanctities ; and the holy round
 Of virtues our humanity attests
 As unitive with the heavenly state ; and proof
 Of our derived divinity ; guardian he
 To us his kindred, though remote, and yet
 On the great stem regraftable ; who man
 With nature guides, exacting righteous fines
 And satisfactions from the temporal, due
 When erring, to the eternal equity shown
 In just proportions, verified by love.
 Here, turning o'er these mighty leaves, I learn
 His primal essence ; cause, mean, end of all ;
 Mean, by permission and endurance ; cause
 By his own will ; and end, that all have joy.
 The circular path of worlds in beauty traced ;
 The total scope of things, thus viewed, heaven taught ;
 The fruitful round of seasons, as on earth,
 So in man's life ; kind nature's loveliness ;
 All witness made to love, and love's deep laws ;
 God-laws ; not written only on stone, nor graven
 Once on a time in granite ; but for aye,
 And everywhere in all things that uphold
 The uses, ends, and harmonies of the world,
 And the stability of the universe :

In ocean's trenched waves, in earth's broad vales,
 In air's wide wind-streams ; in birth, growth, and death ;
 Bloom. fruitage, seed regenerative, decay ;
 The wholesome waste of storms ; the torrent's wrack ;
 The brooklet's silent prattle ; in love, in truth,
 Divine fear, provident virtue, hope of peace ;
 In the heart's aspiration after God's
 Just sanctity and approval ; for the rule
 Of righteousness ; a rightlier balanced life
 To come ; and all the general good that aids ;
 Even evil, but good's less degree, and shown
 Needful, or useful in progression. Soul,
 Struggling against the imperfect and default,
 Back to the intelligent light, must needs return ;
 And finds return, advance, through conquered ills,
 Predestined to attain the good supreme.
 While issuant thus from God's breast, spirit fares
 Various through schooling spheres, and many a round
 Calamitous, to death's nadir ; its return,
 All progress naturally, and intense delight,
 And conscious pressure towards the infinite, shows.
 For evil, moral and natural, though the proofs
 Of imperfection necessary to all
 Created things, are, this, annulled by man's
 Perfectibleness ; by God's foredooming word
 That ; both concurrent ; frames the crucial test
 Each soul must pass, and stand thereby, or fall.
 The fall hath fatal force, and in all spheres,
 As though with gravity's irresistible spell,
 Sin fascinates but to worsen, and with low aims
 For loftier, cheats the inquisitive spirit. But who
 Can love's all saving faithfulness divine,
 That hath not erred ; nor separated the seeds
 Of good and evil, painful task ; nor felt
 All evil hath temporal origin, and so ends ;
 But good, identical with God, endures
 To all eternity, and subtends the base
 Celestial, of his universal life ?
 Thus all things from him, to him witness bear,
 Assentient as their good, their source. There's not
 An angel relegate to the outmost spheres,
 But vaunts his strain divine ; no creatural soul,
 No animate form that foots the soil, or creeps,
 Or ocean nether-tided wanders ; nay,
 There's not the tiniest lifelet flecks the air,
 With wing invisible, who through his sires
 Preadamite ruled earth, but strange lineage boasts,
 And high and azure blood ; nor heaven itself
 From his proud pedigree spares ; but in his coat,
 As heir of life, and life of Him create,
 Quarters the arms of God. Man only, skilled
 To anticipate the divine as virtue's meed ;

The ultimate scope of spirit, and nature's end ;
 To know each holy element, mode, and mean
 Of spiritual refinement ; and in law,
 Note Nature's secondary effects ; in rock,
 The force commute of ocean ; not in earth's
 Life-flowing breast ; nor air's inspiring breath ;
 God's renovative spirit, to trace ; nor yet
 In flamy light of sun or star, the strength
 Which made, and could destroy all ; not in heat,
 However gentle, his reconstructive power ;
 Neither in the ever during, boundless, space,
 Of all, save Deity, void ; science supreme !
 Not in things, God ; so learns to graduate
 In Heaven's, and earth's great mysteries, as to see
 Through spiritual commune with Divinity here
 The secret of reunion, ne'er attained
 Save by the aspiring soul, on arduous path ;
 Man's elevative fall, soul's richening fine ;
 Punition covetable ; heart clarified
 By calming troubles, and the final fruit
 Of meditative perfection to the soul
 Made righteous, hallowing, self elect to serve
 Man and his maker ; this, in essence one ;
 And that in kind and nature myriadfold.
 From every massive page I turned, there came
 The spirit of consolation. Ending thus,
 The book I closed ; rejoiced 'twas mine to know
 The truth transformative of life, that God,
 The conscious Infinite, wills, by rendering soul
 Wistful of his divinity, man to make
 Free, blessed ; and striving towards perfection, crown,
 So loves he those that to him turn, with life
 Immortal his congenerate gift. And now,
 Words heard I whispering me to call within
 The beauteous brave who had dared so much and earned,
 As to her it seemed, albeit I knew, and feared
 The attempt to achieve more. Opening, then, intent
 Again to approach her I so loved, and seek
 Some sign to assure her present entrance, lo !
 The chasm which yawned betwixt us, and at first
 Scarce pace-wide, now showed fathomless, and broad
 As 'tween two waves, 'mid sea, rood-wide is stretched
 Their tempest-cradling hollow, hurricane rocked.
 Desperate, I called ; but now, behold the ground
 As though upon rolling hinges, nether hidden,
 Slode crabwise ; and methought, nay, could it be ?
 The temple against whose wall our leader leaned,
 Tottered, as though deliberant or to stand
 Or fall. One moment more than sated sight.
 For ah ! a shriek I heard ; nor all my years
 Of life had learned me that dread sound ; a shriek
 Which paled my heart dead white ; and turned, I viewed

Slow sinking with the slab she stood on, down;
 Down, irrecoverably the abrupt abyss,
 My loved one, like a sacrifice to night.
 Glory and joy of life, creation's crown,
 Now lost; already do I feel the weight
 Of woes prospective; therefore, time's broad stream
 Flows o'er thine end in silence; hides thy doom.
 To heaven she raised her finger, and was gone.
 Nor saw I, nor aught knew, distinctly more;
 Save that in springing upward, for mere life,
 My own feet failing partly of due hold,
 That vast substructure, all, meseemed, was blent
 With earth's interior chaos, shapes uncouth
 Of primitive formlessnesses; and I passed;
 The mysteries now in mystery all inwomb'd,
 For ever, and ne'er to be by me resought;
 Clear through the death-rift into heavenly day;
 For spirits are e'er born upward while in time,
 As by Cæsarean birth. The orient sun
 Head of the house of heaven, the sire of days,
 The manifestive light, the lord of joy,
 Saluting, prostrate, lo! as when in sight,
 Of axe and headsman, some o'er-wrongous wretch,
 Fear urged, confesseth, but one murderous deed,
 Still unsuspect, keeps back, and with a groan,
 And grinding shudder, locks it in his breast;
 Nor leaves his lips scarce room to vaunt of breath;
 So earth, that fatal fissure with a crash
 Closing, beheld I hide her deathful deed;
 While I, from shutting, as from opening death,
 Doubly escaped, seem scarce convinced of life.
 Thou speakest not.

LUCIFER. I have nothing to observe.
 The quest of knowledge is man's deadliest pride;
 And me nor pride, nor death, surpriseth now.

FESTUS. Twin of my best supports, as though the earth
 Twin elements should miss, my heart hath lost.

LUCIFER. The spirit inquisitive which all things would learn,
 Learns all things nothing may be.

FESTUS. Ah! Let be.
 Life's intransmissive secret now she knows;
 Knows but too well.

LUCIFER. Go to. Have done with these
 Leaflets, that on thy life's voluminous tide
 Float incidently and surface-wise; whose fates,
 Fixed doubtless ere all time; and if with blind,
 And joyous dance of atomies then unglobed,
 Coæval; yet thine own involving not,
 Thou well mayst pass aloofwise.

FESTUS. I would know
 How these effects so distant from the hopes
 Of those who indulged them, came to pass so soon.

Effects which make me truly hate myself
 For gifts, premonitory, and woes ensured
 As fear might shriek, by my predictive tongue?

LUCIFER. Shall I then say, who happily now for thee,
 And thine enlightenment, was there, of all
 The first; without the shrine thou gainedst, for truth's
 Bright sanctuary thou know'st, hast long while known,
 A shrine is, not a temple.

FESTUS. How didst know?

LUCIFER. Not much it matters now. Enough, I saw,
 Heard, all. Thy leader was, I said, a friend,
 What hindereth he may so have favoured me,
 By private predisposure, sight, record,
 Of what so there transpired?

FESTUS. Nought; nought. Proceed,
 I can bear all.

LUCIFER. Scarce had thy foot the floor
 Tested; and thou, absorbed in quest of truth,
 And love celestial, saw'st not aught within,
 But law, ere she, our victress of all tests,
 Without; our fair adventuress; death's last born;
 Spake winsomely her guide, and thine; and said;
 This moment seize; the spirit but now released,
 Just 'scaped the prisoning clay; and floating round,
 Is here; I feel the fanning of his wings.
 Thou, I have heard, hast many a mighty spell;
 Canst bid the eaglet soaring sunwards turn
 And round thy head wheel, liefer; while thou wilt;
 Canst stay the river upon his course; the tide,
 Upon his world-wide path; and halt, mid-air,
 Suspense, the ravening lion in his leap.
 Give me that spell to speak; or speak it thou,
 Which may estop the spirit upon its way,
 To judgment. All too easily led, thy guide
 Complying, what befel next, hear. "I'd know,"
 She said, "What most behoves me learn of all
 Life hath as yet to teach me." In lieu of words,
 Grew, quivering on eve's wavering air (for now,
 Winds land-born, languorous, sighing for the sea,
 Mixed with the breeze, breathed shorewards,) on her eye,
 What seemed a dream of being; such as mind
 With the persistence of a star, which though
 Invisible, on the sensitive mirror stamps
 Its radiated presentment, might on mind,
 Musing abstract Humanity, project.
 Fronting the other each one silent stood;
 The incarnate spirit, and soul disframed. As when
 In time, some nebulous fire-mist feels at once
 All quickening throes composed; and for the birth
 Impatient, waits God's word. "World, be thou born;"
 And on the shrunken and shimmering elements,
 Whence it was bred, now derelict of light,

A pitying glance for weakness passed, sheds, blent
 With pride of power to come ; yet knows, heart-gripped,
 All while by fire interior, henceforth due,
 The frankening fine for absolute life, and state
 Of starhood, how austere the privilege gained ;
 How grave the boon ; so now, this phantom soul,
 Scarce out of touch, 'ware of life's late compeer,
 Previews severe its future. With such sense
 As the pale dawn of consciousness, self-waked
 From deathliest numb, might summon, yet alive,
 Her voice not thoroughly sad, nor wholly lost,
 The sprite seer thus bespake the sprite : "Think not,
 Dear Spirit, our soul-friend but so late, so fond,
 Too soon I seek thy counsel, or demand
 The truth pledge promised. Wept I tears of woe,
 For evermore, not I could now undo
 Death's agonizing passed, and the dread end
 I saw, but might not hinder. Say what truth,
 If such thou knowest, and verity it is said,
 Beams on the soul world-freed, the instant life
 Drops her dark mask, me most imports of all
 My future life on earth to learn ; not less,
 While asking, I repent me of the quest
 I yet persist in, and will err no more,
 In this wise ; still, since now thou art here, I ask."
 "Thine earth-life, know then, beauteous soul, (I hear
 The spirit phantasmal answer) but a dream's
 Duration, while departing ; and, believe
 That as in drowning-death, souls see life passed
 In memory's closing flash, one moment shown ;
 So I, the next, born into spiritual life,
 As far as eyes untried the limitless
 Can test, o'erglimpse the future ; and thus see,
 Spirit ! too daring for thy day, thy name
 With mine compaged, alligned in death's white book.
 One instant, and he turns the allotted leaf
 For ever. Grieve not, need is, each depart
 To spheres remedial ; where o'er curious soul,
 Self trained to error, may hours wasted once
 In seeking petty ignorant sprites, redeem
 By deeds and ministerings, best planned to serve
 The sole All-wise ; and other spirit addict
 To secret knowledge sealed to private use,
 May so be disciplined that many a sphere
 Shall of his preaching profit ; each false thought,
 Each mental vice through zones discriminative
 'Twixt cultured wrong and inscience, and the burst
 Unmoderated of passion, there absterged.
 And expiate, every virtue strengthened ; all
 Shall press, compact, towards perfectness. But not
 With fate of him thou lov'st, blends thine ; nor noons
 His day with thine as both have fondliest hoped ;

Neither may I to tend thee here, aspire,
 A hand more delicate and devout than mine
 Awaits thee on light's threshold, waits for sake
 Of thy pure love and sympathy with all life
 Create of God, a sisterly hand, and prompt
 To guide thee on thy rightward way, more apt
 Than I, who now must my way wend ; wend sole.
 So, ere thou comest, farewell. It is writ in doom
 Our lines of life shall never nearer meet
 Than when, time gone, hand clasped an instant hand.
 Though therefore but a moment sever us now
 That moment means eternity. Farewell."
 "Farewell," she said ; "make others good and blessed ;
 If us no more." "But I, nor blessed, nor good,
 Can neither yet," replied the spirit ; "and now,
 God's judgment is upon me. I am gone,
 Whither, and to what end I know full well ;
 And knowing, gladden, and were it to the extreme
 Of uncreated void, where never ray
 Of nebulous orb, nor wild sun-seeking star,
 Adventurous, strayed, still would I joy, secure
 In His infinite presence, there to meet
 Love equitable ; and fine not more than just,
 For fault finite. Already by my side,
 Bright, but to thee invisible, I behold
 A shadowy monitor, bidding rather keep
 Our spherelet's natal orbit ; brother souls
 Help free from superstition, and prepare
 The spirits of such as tread the food-fraught earth
 For happier gains than yet they dream of ; peace,
 Pure life, and wise morality, homed with all.
 Wherefore with all these kind and welcoming ghosts
 I see around me, eager to accost
 Me hopeful soon to join their armed clouds
 Spiritual, insensitive not, pure souled who still
 Struggling 'gainst ill, are covetous man's great prize,
 Earth's peace, to assure ; in which great cause alone
 I lived, and in this eddy of the fray
 Divine, one moment merged, I died. But not
 Ere the high end I had planned, I knew secured ;
 And not the knell of nations could undo.
 I know the adjudgment leviable on sin ;
 I feel the fine inflicted ; I confess
 Its equity, and before all living things.
 Let but the soul long tempered to endure,
 This hour endure, justice and I are quits ;
 Then shall I face God and the world again,
 He said ; and as thou hast seen some daring pine,
 Rock perched, and pitifully incautious, still
 A tree of God, bend haughtily to the breeze
 It wots of, far away, ere lowlier tops,
 Nearer the wind's eye, but observant less

Of nature's fateful preferences ; so, he
 Of hastening sentence, that nought more might brook,
 Of parle thrust in, betwixt the spirit and God,
 Precognizant, and of rigid right, outspread
 His arms as though to invite swift act ; and last,
 Even like a columned sandcloud, in its breast,
 Holding the vital storm which gives it shape ;
 Gives movement ; gives distraction ; to his doom
 Corrective, sternly bettering, swept away.

FESTUS. To know all this is grievous ; not without
 Some compensation, may be. Following this—

LUCIFER. Knowing not ill what pace an earthquake makes
 How quick from wreck to wreck, from land to land,
 It strides with thunderous footstep, one perchance
 A wanderer, trapped and curbed, thy guide, I take,
 So timed the corseful course of, that such time
 As thou didst hear his few and whispered words,
 Bidding unclothe the gates of truth's bright shrine,
 And thou complying, openedst ;—nay, no more ;
 It was sad indeed, the sight that scared thine eye.

FESTUS. But if by this soul's fate we learn, what tells
 That dearer shade's ?

LUCIFER. One mystery, say, assumed,
 All mysteries proveth.

FESTUS. This, meanwhile, to know,
 Of nature, God, and man, the simple truth,
 Common to all, of all creeds truth the core,
 Outworths all gain beside ; annuls all loss ;
 Pain, suffering. What men else believe nought helps
 Nought harms ; their primal faith this, Godwards, this
 That close as ever we may be in death
 To his feet, we are never closer than in life.
 Clearer or darklier may the vision show
 But it is always there ; and thus to me,
 Deliverance, just passed, out of perilous fate,
 Slipped through death's fingers, solemnizes life,
 Nay, sanctifies. One seems to hold the trust
 More straight from God. No earthly mean we need,
 No graduated conception of the gift,
 To prove its worth through fellow creaturehood,
 Or test our reasoning ; soul rehomed, restalled,
 Renewed, confirms spontaneously its vows,
 Ta'en first when scarce intelligible.

LUCIFER. And now
 Time threatens to forestall our course. Wilt do
 A message for me ?

FESTUS. Aught I will, may serve
 To ease, divert my mind.

LUCIFER. True ; I had forgot.
 Seek then the fair Elissa ; and with her,
 From time to time, confer ; some time it asks,
 Upon thy coming ends, long hoped, which she

May sanction, perchance aid ; (*apart*) but how secure
 Her help toward this end desired, unless
 To impledge her heart for him who aims and burns
 To achieve this pinnacle of world power, she most
 Of women the world boasts of, would adorn ;
 I scarce yet see, more than to know, the work
 Must sudden be, and swift. Go, waste no words.
 Improve thy welcome.

FESTUS. I want something new.

LUCIFER. Hence I assure thee pleasant company,
 More than thine own ; bright future and—

FESTUS. I go.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Yes, go ; but I unseen attend thee yet,
 To warn 'gainst cruel sin ; perchance to save.
 Not even he doth know that I am here.

LUCIFER. Thus to dissemble suits me ; me reminds
 Of whilome triumphs. Well wots the world ere now
 I have starred it on an ampler stage. Meantime
 I get impatient for the end forefixed.

I trust this fair one so to assure, that she,
 In spirit commanding, may the man's excite
 As fitmost for such eminence. Then, all ends.

FESTUS. Now though I do what I desire, or fail,
 Each were not less an evil.

LUCIFER. Nature, friend,
 Is given to man to conquer.

FESTUS. But alas !
 Not yet can we o'ercome our nature here,
 Would we.

LUCIFER. If therefore passion strike the heart,
 Let it have length of line, and plenteous play.
 The safety of superior principles, oft,
 Lies in exhaustion of the lower, vast,
 Or violent, as they may be. What can men,
 Or angels, but obey those ordering laws
 Conscious existence prizes, thrives on ?

FESTUS. Fate !
 Who seeks thee everywhere, will find thee there.

LUCIFER. All hesitancy is ominous.

FESTUS. Such a thought
 Stands in the way of nothing ; not even man.

XXXI.

Our story binds us still for a while to earth,
 And sea all aged, gray at once with years,
 And green with youth. Oft those unhappiest have
 Their heart's desire in dreams; we dreaming that
 Not seldom shall befall us. And when love
 In creature worship merges, who can tell
 What 'tis we love? Perchance incarnate evil.
 For now the evillest one's designs take shape;
 Through beauty to be impressed upon the soul
 Tempted, that each in other rapt, and love
 Of world-pomp, chosen his final gift, all power,
 The end might swiftness happen. Not the less,
 One grain of holiest hope is sown, whence fields
 Other than ours, by patience tilled, shall wave
 With unimagined harvests.

Garden and Bower by the Sea.

LUCIFER and ELISSA. *Afterwards* FESTUS.

LUCIFER. Night comes, world jewelled, as my bride should be.
 Start forth the stars in myriads, at the sign
 Of light, divine usurper, as to wage
 War with the lines of darkness; and the moon
 Pale ghost of light, comes haunting the cold earth
 After the sun's red sea-death, quietless.
 Immortal night! I love thee. Thou and I
 Are of one strain. Heaven's eldest issue, we.
 He makes; we mar together all things; all
 But our own selves. Let love not make thee cold
 And tremble, or thou'lt chill me. That starry robe
 Thou wearest, makes thee lovelier. Love me, night!
 Catch me up to thee, mightiest one. To thee,
 Thee only, fatal power might I unveil
 A plot so great, so just it must succeed,
 Were success merit's predicate. The friend
 Whose fate momentous most to man I treat,
 Long launched with me on a tempestuous track
 See, and still hotlier must I urge, that hurled
 On passion's treacherous shoals, his barque may yet
 Founder, o'erfraught as 'tis with human doom;
 Doom, thou, O precreative night, who holdst
 Within thy breast, the prime concept of things,
 And their last outcome, might'st impart, wert thou
 Oracular, as of old, as of old, kind.
 Small help get I, elsewhere. But surely, here
 Cometh mine earthly. I, in mine own toils
 Seem to me tangled. Her high-natured soul
 Takes seriously all. But to me no end,
 In show, or earnest, save the end of all,
 Remains. To that end all things be mere means.
 What though for her I feign a passion she
 Should feel not (say not feign) for any one,

It irks not me, let fate fulfil its aim,
 It makes but clear the way for the end I mean.
 Nor can we plot, or plan, outside what's known.
 Him for whose fall I care this beauteous dame
 Shall duly dazzle ; and, for I think not much
 Of ultimate perseverance, with their fates
 So blent, if the threads prove pliable enough,
 This way or that, by suffering, or by sin,
 Or patent power, sublimed in secrecy,
 The world's works running gently down, no check
 Will likely mar the smooth decline I mean.
 All things have so far answered the sage plans
 Friends, some, alack ! defunct of life and aim,
 Long toiled, nor fruitlessly, to attain. At last
 Earth shows in travail of an unborn king ;
 The imperial infant, he ; and sooner now
 Than he or any knows, man's mightiest choice
 Is being destined. See slowly, solemnly,
 As riseth from the main the sacred moon,
 Stately and still, she grows upon the night.
 She sees me not. Ere yet she comes is time
 To rectify my spirit to its just points
 Above, around. How is it that now I thrill
 More deeply 'neath her eye-glance than the gaze
 Of spirit or angel ? Can this negative
 Eternal be subdued by things of time ?
 And paltriest affirmations of mere power,
 If by him guided, bear the brunt of worlds ?
 As still, when set the sun, in summer's tide,
 Earth feels, though faintly, his presence ; and the night
 Hath never total dark ; but round her head
 In starry silence, light invisible feels
 Mysteriously his blind way ; so, I now
 Oppressed with what seems coming, as one doomed,
 At day-dawn, which to all beside brings life :
 To him death only. It is Elissa ! Welcome !—

ELISSA. Is't not a lovely, nay, a heavenly eve ?

LUCIFER. Thy presence only makes it so to me.
 The moments thou art with me are like stars
 Peering through my dark life.

ELISSA. Nay, speak not so,
 Or I shall weep, and thou wilt turn away
 From woman's tears : yet are they woman's wealth.

LUCIFER. Then keep thy treasures, lady ! I would not have
 The world, if prized at one sad tear of thine.
 One tear of beauty can outweigh a world
 Even of sin and sorrow, heavy as this ;
 But beauty cannot sin, and should not weep,
 For she is mortal. Oh ! let deathless things
 Alone weep. Why should aught that dies be sad ?

ELISSA. The noble mind is oft too generous,
 And, by protecting, weakens lesser ones ;

And tears must come of feeling, though they quench
As oft the light which love lit in the eye.

LUCIFER. I meant not to be mournful. Tell me, now,
How hast thou passed the hours since last we met?

ELISSA. I have stayed the livelong day within this bower ;
It was here that thou didst promise me to come ;
Watching from wanton morn to repentant eve,
The self-same roses ope and close ; untired,
Listening the same birds first and latest songs.
And still thou camest not. To the mind which waits
Upon one hour, the others are but slaves.
The week hath but one day—the day one hour ;
That hour of the heart—that lord of time.

LUCIFER. Sweet one ! I raced with light, and passed the laggard
To meet thee—or, I mean I could have done—
Yea, have outsped the very dart of death—
So much I sought ; and were I living light
From God, with leave to range the world, and choose
Another brow than his whereon to beam ;
To mark what even an angel could but covet ;
A something lovelier than heaven's loveliness ;
To thee I straight would dart, unheeding all
The lives of other worlds, even those who name
Themselves thy kind ; for oft my mind o'ersoars
The stars ; and, pondering upon what may be
Of their chief lording natures, man's seems worst—
The darkest, meanest, which, through all these worlds,
Drags what is deathless, may be, down to dust.

ELISSA. Speak not so bitterly of human kind ;
I know that thou dost love it. Hast not heard
Of those great spirits, who the greater grow
The better we are able them to prize ?
Great minds can never cease ; yet have they not
A separate estate of deathlessness :
The future is a remnant of their life :
Our time is part of theirs, not theirs of ours ;
They know the thoughts of ages long before.
It is not the weak mind feels the great mind's might ;
None but the great can test it. Feels the oak
Or reed the strong storm keenlier ? Oh, unsay
What thou hast said of man ; nor deem me wrong.
Mind cannot mind despise—it is itself.
Mind must love mind : the great and good are friends ;
And he is but half great who is not good.
And, oh ! humanity is the fairest flower
Blooming in earthly breasts ; so sweet and pure,
That it might freshen even the fadeless wreaths
Twined round the golden harps of those in heaven.

LUCIFER. For thy sake I will love even man, or aught,
Spirit were I, and a mere mortal thou,
For thy sake I would even seek to die ;
That, dead or living, I might still be with thee.

But no ! I'll deem thee deathless—mind and make,
 And worthier of some spirit's love than mine ;
 Yea, of the first born of God's sons, could he,
 In that sweet shade thy beauty casts o'er all,
 One moment lay and cool his burning soul ;
 Or might the ark of his wide flood-like woe
 But rest upon that mount of peace and bliss,
 Thy heart imbosomed in all beauteousness.
 Nay, lady ! shrink not. Thinkest thou I am he ?

ELISSA. Thou art too noble, far. I oft have wished,
 Ere I knew thee, I had some spirit's love ;
 But thou art more like what I sought than man :
 And a forbidden quest, it seems ; for thou
 Hast more of awe than love about thee, like
 The mystery of dreams which we can feel,
 But cannot touch.

LUCIFER. Nay, think not so ! It is wrong.
 Come, let us sit in this thy favourite bower,
 And I will hear thee sing. I love that voice,
 Dipping more softly on the subject ear
 Than that calm kiss the willow gives the wave ;
 A soft rich tone, a rainbow of sweet sounds,
 Just spanning the soothed sense. Come, nay me not.

ELISSA. Do thou lead out some lay ; I'll follow thine.

LUCIFER. Well, I agree. It will spare me much of shame
 In coming after thee. My song is said
 Of Lucifer the star. See, there he shines !

I am Lucifer, the star ;
 Oh ! think on me,
 As I lighten from afar
 The heavens and thee ;
 In town, or tower,
 Or this fair bower,
 Oh ! think on me ;
 Though a wandering star,
 As the loveliest are,
 I love but thee.

Lady ! when I brightest beam,
 Love, look on me ;
 I am not what I may seem
 To the world or thee ;
 But fain would love
 With thee above,
 Where thou wilt be.
 But if love be a dream,
 As the world doth deem,
 What is't to me ?

ELISSA. Could we but deem the stars had hearts, and loved,
 They would seem happier, holier, even than now ;
 And, ah ! why not ? they are so beautiful
 And love is part and union in itself
 Of all that is in nature brilliant, pure ;
 Of all in feeling sacred and sublime.

Surely the stars are images of love :
 The sunbeam and the starbeam doth bring love.
 The sky, the sea, the rainbow, and the stream,
 And dark blue hill, where all the loveliness
 Of earth and heaven, in sweet ecstatic strife,
 Seem mingling hues which might immortal be,
 If length of life by height of beauty went :
 All seem but made for love—love made for all :
 We do become all heart with those we love :
 It is nature's self—it is everywhere—it is here.

LUCIFER. To me there is but one place in the world,
 And that where thou art ; for where'er I be,
 Thy love doth seek its way into my heart,
 As will a bird into her secret nest :
 Then sit and sing ; sweet wing of beauty, sing.

ELISSA. Bright one ! who dwellest in the happy skies,
 Rejoicing in thy light as does the brave
 In his keen flashing sword, and his strong arm's
 Swift swoop, canst thou, from among the sons of men
 Single out those who love thee as do I
 Thee from thy fellow glories ? If so, star,
 Turn hither thy bright front ; I love thee, friend,
 Thou hast no deeds of darkness. All thou dost
 Is to us light and beauty : yea, thou art
 A globe all glory ; thou who at the first
 Didst answer to the angels which in heaven
 Sang the bright birth of earth, and even now,
 As star by star is born, dost sing the same
 With countless hosts in infinite delight,
 Be unto me a moment ! Write thy bright
 Light on my heart before the sun shall rise
 And vanquish sight. Thou art the prophesy
 Of light which he fulfils. Speak, shining star,
 Drop from thy golden lips the truths of heaven.
 First of all stars and favourite of the skies,
 Apostle of the sun—thou upon whom
 His mantle resteth—speak, prophetic beauty !
 Speak, shining star out of the heights of heaven.
 Beautiful being, speak to God for man !
 Is it because of beauty thou wast chosen
 To be the sign of sin ? For surely sin
 Must be surpassing lovely when for her
 Men forfeit God's reward of deathless bliss,
 And life divine ; or, is it that such beauty,
 Sometimes before the truth, and sometimes after,
 As is a moral or a prophesy,
 Is ever warning ? Why wert thou accorded
 To the great Evil ? Is it because thou art
 Of all the sun's bright servants nearest earth ?
 Star of the morning ! unto us thou art
 The presage of a day of power. Like thee
 Let us rejoice in life, then, and proclaim

A glory coming greater than our own.
 All ages are but stars to that which comes,
 Sunlike. Oh ! speak, star ! Lift thou up thy voice
 Out of yon radiant ranks, and I on earth,
 As thou in heaven, will bless the Lord God ever.
 Hear, Lucifer, thou star ! I answer thee.

Oh ! ask me not to look and love,
 But bid me worship thee ;
 For thou art earthly things above,
 As far as angels be :
 Then whether in the eve or morn
 Thou dost the maiden skies adorn,
 Oh ! let me worship thee !

I am but as this drop of dew ;
 Oh ! let me worship thee !
 Thy light, thy strength, is ever new,
 Even as the angels' be :
 And as this dewdrop, till it dies,
 Bosoms the golden stars and skies,
 Oh ! let me worship thee !

But, dearest, why that dark look ?

LUCIFER. Let it not
 Cloud thine even with its shadow : but the ground
 Of all great thoughts is sadness ; and I mused
 Upon passed happiness. Well—be it passed !
 Did Lucifer, as I do, gaze on thee,
 The flame of woe would flicker in his breast,
 And straight die out—the brightness of thy beauty
 Quenching it as the sun doth earthly fire.

ELISSA. Nay, look not on me so intensely sad.

LUCIFER. Forgive me : it was an agony of bliss.
 I love thee, and am full of happiness.
 My bosom bounds beneath thy smile, as bounds
 The sea's unto the moon, his mighty mistress ;
 Lying and looking up to her, and saying,
 Lovely ! lovely ! lovely ! lady of the heavens !
 Oh ! when the thoughts of other joyous days,
 Perchance, if such may be, of happier times,
 Are falling gently upon the memory,
 Like autumn's leaves distained with dusky gold,
 Yet softly as a snowflake ; and the smile
 Of kindness, like thine, is beaming on me ;
 Oh ! pardon, if I lose myself, nor know
 Whether I be with heaven, or thee.

ELISSA. Use not
 Such ardent phrase, nor mix the claim of aught
 On earth, with thoughts more than with hopes of heaven.

LUCIFER. Hopes, lady ! I have none.

ELISSA. Thou must have. All
 Have hopes, however wretched they may be,
 Or blessed. It is hope which lifts the lark so high,
 Hope of a lighter air and bluer sky ;
 And the poor hack which drops down on the flints,

Upon whose eye the dust is settling, he
Hopes, but to die. No being exists, of hope
Of love, void.

LUCIFER. Yes, one is ; the ancient Ill,
Dwelling and damned through all which is : that spirit
Whose heart is hate ; who is the foe of God ;
The foe of all.

ELISSA. How knowest thou such doth live ?
If one there be, the spirit foe of man,
It is only that inferiors still must strive.
With God they cannot strive nor dare to deem.
What single star could in itself abide
The onset of the armies of the heavens ?
How then all armies his, who all hath made ?
And made in love ? Oh, trust me, never fell
By love, a spirit or earthly, or of heaven.
Rather by love they are regenerate ; love,
Mind's happiest privilege, of all living things
The sole sufficing reason. A threehood
There seems of principles, which represent
And rule created life ; the love of self,
Our fellows, and our God. In all there reigns
One common feeling ; each maintains the other ;
Compatible all, all needful ; this to life,
To virtue, that, to bliss all. All, together,
Source, end, perfection show of being create.
From these three principles cometh every deed,
Desire, will, reasoning, good or bad ; to these
They all determine—sum and scheme : the three
In centre and in round, one, wrap life's world
Sky-wise. Hail ! air of love, whereby we live ;
How sweet, how fragrant ! Spirit, though unseen—
Immortal, immaterial, though it be.
One only simple essence liveth—God,—
Creator, uncreate. The brutes beneath,
The Angels high above us, with ourselves,
Are but compounded things of mind and form.
In all things animate is therefore cored
An elemental sameness of existence ;
For God, being love, in love created all,
As he contains the whole, and penetrates.
Seraphs love God, and angels love the good ;
We love each other ; and these lower lives,
Which walk the earth in thousand diverse shapes,
In whose mean being see God's humility,
According to their reason, love us too ;
The most intelligent affect us most.
Nay, man's chief wisdom's love—the love of God.
The new religion—final, perfect, pure—
Is that of mercy and love. Heaven's great command,
Our all-sufficing precept—is't not love ?
Truly to love ourselves we must love God.

To love God we must all his creatures love—
 To love his creatures, both ourselves and him.
 This love is all that's wise, fair, good, and happy.

LUCIFER. How knowest thou God doth live? why did he not
 With that same hand which scattered o'er the sky,
 As this small dust I strew upon the wind,
 Yon countless orbs, aye fixing each on him
 Its flaming eye, which winks and blenches oft
 Beneath his glance,—with the finger of that hand
 Which spangled o'er infinity with suns,
 And wrapped it round about him as a robe?
 Why did he not write out his own great name
 In spheres of fire, that heaven might always tell
 To every creature, God? If not, then why
 Should I believe when I behold around me
 Nought, scarce, save ill and woe?

ELISSA. God surely lives!
 Without God all things are in tunnel darkness.
 Let there be God, and all are sun—all God.
 And to the just soul, in a future state,
 Defect's dark mist, thick-spreading o'er this vale,
 Shall dim the eye no more, nor bound survey;
 And evil, now which boweth being down
 As dew the grass, shall only fit all life
 For fresher growth and for intenser day,
 Where God shall dry all tears as the sun dew.

LUCIFER. O lady! I am wretched.

ELISSA. Say not so.
 With thee I could not deem myself unhappy.
 Hark to the sea! Like the near hum it sounds
 Of a great city.

LUCIFER. Say, the city earth;
 For such these orbs are in the realms of space.

ELISSA. I dreamed once that the night came down to me:
 In figure, oh! too like thine own for truth,
 And looked into me with his thousand eyes;
 And that made me unhappy; but it passed;
 And I half wished it back. Mind hath its earth
 And heaven. The many petty common thoughts
 Whereon we daily tread, as it were, make one,
 And above which few look; the other is
 That high and welkin-like infinity,—
 The brighter, upper half of the mind's world,
 Thick with great sun-light and constellate thoughts;
 And in the night of mind, which is our sleep,
 These thoughts shine out in dreams. Dreams double life;
 They are the heart's bright shadow on life's flood;
 And even the step from death to deathlessness,
 From this earth's gross existence unto heaven,
 Can scarce be more than from the harsh hot day,
 To sleep's soft scenes, the moonlight of the mind.
 The wave is never weary of the wind,

And in mountainous playfulness leaps to it always.
 But mind, world wearied, glooms itself in sleep,
 Like a sweet smile, settling into proper sadness ;
 For sleep seems part of our immortality ;
 And why should anything that dies be sad ?
 Last night I dreamed I walked within a hall—
 The concave of the world. Long shroud-like lights
 Lit up its lift-like dome, and pale wide walls,
 Horizon like : and every one was there ;
 It was the house of death, and Death was there.
 We could not see him, but he was a feeling :
 We knew he was around us—heard us—eyed us ;
 But where wast thou ? Thee met I not. And all
 Was still as primal nothingness ; or as God,
 Deep judging, when the thought of making first
 Quickened and stirred within him ; and he made
 All heaven at one thought as at a glance.
 Noise was there none ; and yet there was a sound,
 Which seemed to be half like silence, half like sound.
 All crept about still as the cold wet worms,
 Which slid among our feet, we could not 'scape from.
 Round me were ruined fragments of dead gods—
 Those shadows of the mystery of One—
 And the red worms, too, flourished over these,
 For marble is a shadow weighed with mind ;
 Each being, as men of old believed who 'neath
 A dim starlight of truth religious lived,
 A moral night, contrast with ours,—distinct
 In form, and place, and power. But oh ! not all
 The gathered gods of eld could shine like ours,
 No more than all yon stars could make a sun.
 I felt my spirit's spring gush out more clear,
 Gazing on these : they beautified my mind,
 As rocks and flowers reflected do a well.
 Mind makes itself like that it lives amidst,
 And on ; and thus, among dreams, imaginings,
 And scenes of awe, and purity, and power,
 Grows sternly sweet and calm—all beautiful
 With godlike coldness and unconsciousness
 Of mortal passion, mental toil ; until,
 Like to the marble model of a god,
 It doth assume a firm and dazzling form,
 Scarcely less incorruptible than that
 Its emblems : and so grew, methought, my mind.
 Matter hath many qualities ; mind, one :
 It is irresistible : pure power—pure god.
 While wandering on I met what seemed myself :
 Was it not strange that we should meet, and there ?
 But all is strange in dreaming, as in death,
 And waking, as in life ; nought is not strange.
 Methought that I was happy, because dead.
 All hurried to and fro ; and many cried

To each other—Can I do thee any good ?
But no one heeded : nothing could avail :
The world was one great grave. I looked, and saw
Time on his two great wings—one, night—one, day—
Fly moth-like right into the flickering sun ;
So that the sun went out, and they both perished.
And one gat up and spake—a holy man—
Exhorting them ; but each and all cried out—
Go to ! it helps not—means not ; we are dead.
Death spake no word methought, but me he made
Speak for him ; and I dreamed that I was death ;
Then, that Death only lived ; all things were mixed ;
Up and down shooting, like the brain's fierce dance
In a delirium, when we are apt to die.
' Hell is my heir : what kin to me is heaven ?
Bring out your hearts before me. Give your limbs
To whom ye list or love. My son, Decay,
Will take them : give them him. I want your hearts,
That I may take them up to God.' There came
These words amongst us, but we knew not whence.
It was as if the air spake. And there rose
Out of the earth a giant thing, all earth ;
His eye was earthy, and his arm was earthy ;
Heart had he none. He but said, I am Decay ;
And as he spake, he crumbled into earth,
And there was nothing of him. But we all
Lifted our faces up at the word, God,
And spied a dark star high above in the midst
Of others, numberless as are the dead,
And all plucked out their hearts, and held them in
Their right hands. Many tried to pick out specks
And stains, but could not ; each gave up his heart.
And something—all things—nothing—it was Death,
Said, as before, from air—Let us to God !
And straight we rose, leaving behind the raw
Worms and dead gods, all of us—soared and soared
Right upwards, till the star I told thee of,
Looked like a moon—the moon became a sun :
The sun—there came a hand between the sun and us,
And its five fingers made five nights in air.
God tore the crown from off the sun's broad brow,
And flung the flaming glory flat to hell.
And when I heard a long, cold, skeleton scream,
Like a trumpet whining through a catacomb,
Which made the sides of that great grave shake in.
I saw the world and vision of the dead
Dim itself off—and all was life. I woke,
And felt the high sun blazoning on my brow,
His own almighty mockery of woe,
And fierce and infinite laugh at things which cease.
Hell hath its light—and heaven ; he burns with both.
And my dream broke, like life from the last limb

Quivering ; so loth I felt to let it go,
 Just as I thought I had caught sight of heaven,
 And seen my last of life's unhappiness.
 It came to nought, as dreams of heaven on earth
 Do always. Have I touched some spirit-chord,
 Adroitless, jars within thy mind ? For, see !
 Like to a mountain battlemented with cloud,
 Some gloomy thought, what is't ? o'erpen's thy brow ?

LUCIFER. It is only this ; we are to part.

ELISSA.

So soon !

Farewell, then, gentle stars ! To-night, farewell !
 For we all part at once. It is thus the bright
 Visions and joy of youth break up—but they
 For ever. When ye shine again I will
 Be with ye ; for I love ye next to him.

To all, adieu ! When shall I see thee next ?

LUCIFER. Lady, I know not.

ELISSA.

Say !

LUCIFER.

Never, perchance.

ELISSA. There is but one immortal in the world

Who need say—never !

LUCIFER.

What if I were he ?

ELISSA. But thou art not he ; and thou shalt not say it.
 There is not a thing so ill I would not save
 Had I the power, from ill, and from itself.

LUCIFER. A thought inspired ; it might have come from heaven.
 Thou art the soul of kindness.

ELISSA.

Who so speaks

The soul of kindness, speaks the mind of God ;

For nature is all kind, and all he made.

Justice and power are attributes of God,
 But love his essence. How then harmonize

Infinite love with creatures' endless woe ?

If every creatural act be finite, all

God's infinite, then must his love at last

Win every spirit, and all hate subdue.

Can God's will fail for ever ? But he wills,

And must, that all souls should be saved and blessed.

As man could never be more just than God,

Shall God, too, be less merciful than man ?

The soul create imperfect therefore sins

Because imperfect ; but by him redeemed,

As by an universal sacrifice,

Being is saved ; and sin gone, suffering ends.

Then, finite nature, which can only know

Imperfect good, by purifying spheres

Of wisdom and progression, grace sustained,

Harmonious lives with the eternal heavens.

Oh ! let us meet and talk of things like these,

Always. I love the thought of boundless good.

Stars rise and set, like beauteous, through all time,

With a sublime exactitude to meet

Each other's faces. Why not we, like them ?

LUCIFER. I see no beauty—feel no love—all things
Are unlovely.

ELISSA. O earth ! be deaf ; and heaven
Shut thy blue eye. He doth blaspheme the world.
Dost not love me ?

LUCIFER. Love thee ? Ay ! earth and heaven,
Together, could not make a love like mine !

ELISSA. When wilt thou come again ? To-morrow ?

LUCIFER. Well.
And then I cross yon sea ere I return ;
For I have matters in another land.
Fear not.

ELISSA. When will our parting days be over ?

LUCIFER. Oh ! soon—soon ! Think of me, love, on the waters !
Be happy ! and, for me, what love I more
Than at night to ride upon the broad-backed billow,
Seasing along and plunging on his precipitous path ;
While the red moon is westering low away,
And the mad waves are fighting for the stars,
Or, say, their transient imagery, sea-sown,
Like men for—what they know not ?

ELISSA. Scorners !

LUCIFER. Saint !

ELISSA. Much that is great hath earth ; and but one sea ;
To her, as is her spirit ; impulsive oft,
As the mad monarch passion to the heart,
Fathomless, overwhelming, which receives
The rivers of all feeling ; in whose depths
Lie wrecked all nature's riches ; God, O sea !
Stainless, immaculable by death, by earth
Of grossliest burthened stream, unfiled ; while all
Accepting, purifying, commuting ; God,
When first he made thee, moved upon thee then ;
And left his impress there, the same even now,
As when thy last wave leapt from chaos.—Hark !
Nay, there is some one coming.

FESTUS (*entering*). It is I.

I said we should be sure to meet thee here :
For I have brought one who would speak with thee.

LUCIFER. Thanks ! and where is he ?

FESTUS. Yonder. He would not
Come up so far as this.

LUCIFER. Who is it ?

FESTUS. I know not

Who he may be, or what ; but I can guess.

LUCIFER. Remain a moment, love, till I return.

ELISSA. Nay—let me leave !

LUCIFER. Not yet : do not dislike him.
He is a friend, and more another time.

FESTUS. I am sorry, lady, to have caused this parting.
I fear I am unwelcome.

ELISSA. We were parting.

FESTUS. Then am I doubly sorry; for I know
It is the saddest and the sacredest
Moment of all with those who love.

ELISSA. He is coming !
So I forgive thee.

LUCIFER. I must leave thee, love :
I know not for how long : it rests with thee
If it seem long at all. Eternity
Might pass, and I not know it, in thy love.

ELISSA. If to believe that I do love thee always,
May make time fly the fleetest—

LUCIFER. I'll believe it—
Trust me. I leave this lady in thy charge,
Festus. Be kind—wait on her—may he, love ?
ELISSA. Thou knowest. I receive him as thy friend,
Whenever he come.

FESTUS. I ask no higher title
Than friend of the lovely and the generous.

ELISSA. Farewell !

FESTUS. Lady ! I will not forget my trust.
(*Apart*) The breeze which curls the lake's bright lip but lifts
A purer, deeper, water to the light ;
The ruffling of the wild bird's wing but wakes
A warmer beauty and a downier depth.
That startled shrink, that faintest blossom-blush
Of constancy alarmed !—Love ! if thou own'st
One weapon in that shining armoury,
The quiver on thy shoulder, where thou keep'st
Each arrowy eye-beam feathered with a sigh ;
If from that bow, shaped so like beauty's lip,
Strung with its string of pearls, thou wilt twang forth
But one dart, fair into the mark I mean,
Do it, and I will worship thee for ever ;
Yea, I will give thee glory and a name
Known, sunlike, in all nations. Heart be still !
My message given, I go.

ELISSA. Farewell.

LUCIFER. Farewell,
Fare ill, it irks not me. The man is mine.
Mine, too, the snare, I laid it, true enough.
Plot without ceasing, something haps at last.
This parting over—

ELISSA. Yes, this one—and then ?

LUCIFER. Why, then another, may be.

ELISSA. No—no more.
I'll be unhappy if thou tell'st me so.

LUCIFER. Well, then—no more.

ELISSA. But when wilt thou come back ?

LUCIFER. Almost before thou wishest. He will know.

ELISSA. I shall be always asking him.

LUCIFER. One word

Apart with thee ere yet thou leavest. Know,
 I have with him a purpose thou mayst aid.
 Conscious though careless of the future, he
 Thou wot'st of, breathes premarked to mighty ends,
 The heir of fate; and though to states unknown,
 The destined head he lives of power mundane,
 Than grandest monarch's more. His soul, as yet
 Absorbed in love of wisdom, and his heart
 In beauty's starry smile steeped, lack the lure
 To climb ambition's heights, where yet his foot,
 Outstepping all, is due. If thou, possessed
 With aught of friendly impulse, to that end
 Couldst wake into a glow the torpid gleeds
 Which wait the inspiring breath, words, as may suit,
 Of ardour or contempt—forms audible—
 Thy fealty to mewards I hold firm,—
 It will much advantage me, and mine own ends
 Advance.

ELISSA. I doubt not, but in worthy purposes,
 One might adventure more than words; and this
 Towers on the mind more grandly, as the thought
 Is contemplated.

LUCIFER. True. Perchance himself
 Urged warily may to thine ears confide
 The future, and success concert with thee.
 Tempt him, and he might name thee queen of earth.
 Yea, stamped by thine ascendant soul, commence
 That bright career the world awaits.

ELISSA. And thou?
 What part hast thou in this?

LUCIFER. A great one I,
 Though not like his.

ELISSA. Ah, me! A second-best.

LUCIFER. Who doeth not great things with equal ease,
 And small, doth but indifferently.

ELISSA. We all
 Have met ere now.

LUCIFER. My fault it shall not be
 That ye are strangers.

ELISSA. Say for me—farewell!

LUCIFER. Shine on, ye stars! and light her to her rest;
 Scarce are ye worthy for her handmaidens.
 Why, hell would laugh to learn I had been in love,
 As rumour through some impish spy may blab,
 And would be blind, as they oft are who laugh;
 Not seeing their own folly, nor the flaw
 Which stars their self-deceit. These twain I bring
 Together as prime factors in my sum,
 The evil most profound I can achieve—
 Earth's sudden death. Yet, through the boundless mist
 Of mockery I have played with, one bright peak,
 Sharp, solid, peers into the upper light;

One thought of good, one seed of sacred truth,
 One priceless pearl fallen from love's fairy lips,
 Hath sunk into my soul. It irks me not,
 Though, like the projective powder of adept,
 Hell's base metallic mass it should transmute
 Into one pure and perfect orb of gold,
 The future is to be; and not as yet
 Can I be balked. Eradicated good
 Hath heretofore the aim been of my being.
 Shall I not strive to root it out then, hence?
 See which is stronger, that, or I? though helped
 By all creation's wrong and wretchedness?
 The war of good and evil narrowed here
 To mine own spirit, it is time to force the strife.
 All obstacles must be removed, the fates
 Are fast maturing to their end, at once.
 Thou seemest fixed in thought, as a star in space.
 Hast thought of that, I whilom promised thee?

FESTUS.

Soon, then soon.

My mind is now intent on other aims.

LUCIFER. The world perhaps will hear of?

FESTUS.

Ay, anon.

LUCIFER. I have affairs in hell. Wilt go with me?

FESTUS. Yes, in a month or two :—not just this minute.

LUCIFER. I shall be there and back again ere then.

FESTUS. Meanwhile I can amuse myself; so, go!

But some time I would fain behold thy home,
 And pass the gates of fire.

LUCIFER.

Thou shalt, and soon.

My home is everywhere where spirit is.

FESTUS. The strongest passion which I have is honour:

I would I had none: it is in my way.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. One moment, Festus; go! I follow.

LUCIFER.

Gone?

All things are as I meant them. On the ridge
 Of ruin, how we brave it; as though one,
 Ambitious of a seat in heaven, above
 The cloud-encumbered pathway of the wind,
 Should sit the tremulous bridge all-hued, which spans
 Air's stormy realms, fate scorned. To mark an eagle,
 Batting the sunny ceiling of the world,
 With his dark wings, one well might deem his heart
 On heaven; but no! it is fixed on flesh and blood;
 And soon his talons tell it. Let me think.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Thy great decrees, O God of grace! be given
 To humblest spirits to know: too blessed if they,
 Thy holy secrets sharing, live, depute,
 To work thy universal will, and ground
 In thine intents the all-embracing heavens.
 Empowered by thee to serve thine ends divine,
 We learn the thoughts of others; and in this wise
 Now know I thine, O Lucifer! thy schemes

'Gainst God's elect, by mortal, fatal sin
 To ruin ; but the words within thy spirit,
 Let fall by her thou once wouldst sacrifice ;
 I, and her angel here together prayed ;
 Like the atomic seed of worlds, the heart
 And nucleus of new nature shall betimes,
 By will of God regenerate ; and all aims
 Of creatural evil frustrate, God's sole end
 Of universal good o'erride all bounds ;
 And in his infinite satisfaction close
 The world of life :—words which, truth-soul'd, have struck
 To the main root of being ; thoughts of good
 Thou canst not now annihilate ; hopes which bear,
 Though silent, witness not to be suppressed
 By time, like earth's immarbled sediments,
 To age-compressing floods. Thou wilt not brook
 To her, harm ; even this can I foresee ;
 And thus thy first good deed, rebuking thought
 Of ill in other, shall both her and him
 Whom thou wouldst lure to ill, and loss of bliss,
 Them and thee profit. Time, and God's high will
 Shall all things else educe, as writ in heaven.
 But he shall know my presence ere I go.
 Spirit, I warn thee !

LUCIFER.

What! celestial friend !

Meet we once more ?

GUARDIAN ANGEL. At last, let mockery cease.

LUCIFER. Let mockery cease. I have—is this not true?
 To be is something, to believe is more—
 While owning Him supreme, believed his good,
 Yet bounded by mine evil ?

GUARDIAN ANGEL. O, conceit
 Most false, most fearful ! How then shall he gain
 The victories he hath promised to himself,
 And all, in everlasting prophecies,
 If he subdue not evil and transform
 All ill to good ? That were a victory vast,
 And of none other hand achievable ;
 Worthy indeed of God.

LUCIFER.

This sole I see ;

All evil I must elaborate to the end,
 Both in this mortal and myself. Meanwhile
 Can I not, in his heart—bad, base return
 True, for that late to me vouchsafed,—one thought
 Evil, one wild desire, instil ; of soul
 Perilous, if ruinous not ? 'Gainst both, in sooth,
 Must I take arms ; as the audacious main
 Combats twin elements at once, the land
 Lashing with breakers, while with clouded foam,
 The neutral air intimidate, he invades.
 But dare I meet the fate mysterious, now
 Threatened, or promised is't? awaits me ? \Well ;

It recks not. I can brave it to the last.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. My lips are sealed, mine eyes.

LUCIFER.

Mine, too. Around

The cavèd heavens I grope, nor see escape ;

This everlasting vault, these tombing skies.

XXXII.

Hearts, like moons,
Mature apace ; and while one half the world
Is busy, and one half dreaming, Passion's path
Is miled of perilous ventures scarcely 'scaped
By sheer precipitancy, as ice unsafe
Oft rends not till we are sped. Pity the fair
Embodiment of thrice passionate love, by man
From his fiend friend won ; the lure yet laid of power,
Ambition's highest to attract, learn, justly fails ;
Nor less the false solution this would seek
Of selfish luxury, and a life unawed
By relevance to the eternal, and its dues.
Thus wiled, lo ! life's defeat we fame ; with cups
Of air inebriate, or more substedced, drain
Deceived, the wine of our own death-feast ; plot,
Ravenous of doom, self-ruin ; but this withheld.
See wars of soul with soul that but half-won
Half lost on either side feints prove contrived,
By the bad spirit's means for his own worst ends :
Whom we know not when come ; so dark we grow.

Mansion overlooking the Sea. Interior. A Drawing-room.

FESTUS and ELISSA. GUARDIAN ANGEL. LUCIFER.

FESTUS. Who says he loves and is not wretched, lies.

Or that love is madness, mad from his mother came.

It is the most reasonable thing in nature.

What can we do but love ? It is our cup ;

Our fine, our passion. In heaven's name, Elissa !

What was it made us love ?

ELISSA.

I know not, what ?

I am not happy. I have wept all day.

FESTUS. It was thine own fault. What wouldst thou have of me ?

I tell thee we must—no : I cannot tell thee.

I cannot brook those tears. Thou knowest I love thee,

Worship thee ; oh it's a world more than worship,

The cold obedience given to God. Elissa,

Turn towards me thy fair brow.

ELISSA.

Nay, let me weep.

FESTUS. Thou hadst no need, no call, no cause to have loved me.

One was, who well loved thee.

ELISSA.

I could not help

His loving me ; nor, woe is me ! prevent

My loving thee. Alas ! it is our fate.

FESTUS. Then fate hath fee'd the passion for our end ;
And we are sold to ruin.

ELISSA. Then we will die
Together ; quit together body and life ;
But while I live, none can I love but thee.
Look at me ; heart and arms, I am thine own ;
Have been, must be. Oh ! I was happy once ;
Ere I knew thee. And thou, why wast thou kind
To me, kind cruelly, or this had not been
Ever. But now, be cruel, if thou wilt.
Hate me, still I am thine ; disown me, thine ;
Desert me, no thou canst not. Look at me,
I am half blind with weeping, and mine eyes
Have scarce a tear left in them, for I yet
Dread how 'twill end. Thou wilt leave me, leave me, lone,
Loveless, forgot.

FESTUS. Nay, if we are given to forge
Adventures, let it be so. Say, we part.

Say, we must part. Think that I come again.

ELISSA. Not be again with thee, nor thou with me !
It is too much. Let me go mad, or die.

FESTUS. Live mine, Elissa ; and I will ever love thee.

ELISSA. Wilt thou ? Oh make me happy. Say it again.
I cannot know too often of my bliss.

FESTUS (*apart*). As shakes the continent 'neath the solid fall
Of mighty stream, lake-gorged, appalling air,
Thought wildering, so my heart by passion's force
Stunned, rests nor night nor day, but rocks with one
Ceaseless vibration. Does the very air
Whisper forbiddance to my will ?

GUARDIAN ANGEL. O soul,
Be wise ! The vast invisible witness all
Beholds.

ELISSA. But say, dost love me ? wilt thou love me ?

FESTUS. Since I have known thee I have done nought else.
All hours not spent with thee are blanks between stars.
Love thee ? I love thee madly, Thou hast drained,
Of all its love, mine heart. It will empty be
To aught after thee. Ay, now relume thine eyes,
Those eyes that might a moment win the glance
Of any seraph gazing not the throne.

ELISSA. No wonder thine. What ! tears ! 'Tis thy turn now.
Sad formulary with me of speechless grief !
One retributive tear is there. Nay, why ?

FESTUS. 'Tis strange, 'tis startling, is the first hot tear
We have shed, may be for years ; and which hath lain
Like a water-fairy in the eye's blue depths,
Spell-bound ; death freed it not ; pain, not ; nor shame ;
Nor penitence, nor much pity, nor despair ;
What else but love could ? For a fearful time
We can keep down the floodgates of the heart,
But somehow we must draw them, or it will burst

Like sand, this brave embankment of the breast,
And drain itself to dry death. When pride thaws,
Look for floods. I have that in thought that sets
Between me and the world a bar, no power
Can loose.

ELISSA. What thought? Our time may soon be over.

FESTUS. I cannot think of time; there is no time.
Time, time, I hate thee with the hate of hell
For aught that's good, but thou art infamous.
I will give thee half mine immortality
To keep back for an hour. Leave me to-night,
And wither me to-morrow like a weed.

ELISSA. Where is he now?

FESTUS. In Hades, hope!

ELISSA. What mean'st thou?

He wronged thee never. Say, when cometh he?

FESTUS. To-night.

ELISSA. He comes to sever us like fate.
But shall he part us?

FESTUS. Never. Let him part
The sun in twain first.

ELISSA. Now, would I, he came
Right speedily, for it frets me until freed
Frankly, from all allegiance.

FESTUS. See him not,
He will re-lure thy spirit with vain deceits;
Or try. No, hence with me. Trust me. Away,
Ere he come.

ELISSA. I may not. It was ever thus;
I am born to make unhappy all around me.

FESTUS. Of thy being wrong I will not hear; it is I;
I am the false usurper. And since one
Must be a sacrifice, be it me.

ELISSA. Thou swarest,
Even now to love me ever!

FESTUS. Be it so.
I have sworn, and now and then I keep my oath;
I will not give thee up.

ELISSA. We have been too happy.
We might have known woe follows bliss as close
As death, life.

FESTUS. Ah! how cold thy hand is. Here,
Warm it upon my heart. Nay, let it be.
The hand that is on the heart is on the soul.
And it is thus some moments take the heart,
Life's wheel, and steer us through eternity.

ELISSA. Loose, now, my hand.

FESTUS. Look beautiful on me then!
Speak to me. Keep my name upon thy lips,
Steeped in their roseate dew, lips sacred aye
To the word that shall be; and the unexpressed sweets
Of possible music; hither turn those eyes,

Within whose depths one streaming star, the soul's
 Ascendant, radiant rules, that mine may share
 Their dear translated light ; that cheek, just tinged
 As with the visible echo of a blush ;
 Pale as the sumptuous bosom'd rose, which, save
 For its heart, might vie with snow ; that crescent brow
 Beaming with soul-light, oh, incline to mine.
 Nay, do not weep. We never trust your tears.
 Tears, even as spirits within a magic glass,
 Upon practised witchery, wait on woman's will.

ELISSA. Wrong me not thus. The end of love is woe,
 And of woe, death, and of death, death alone.
 And there is no redemption for the heart.

FESTUS. Love hath no end except itself. We only
 Felt we loved, and were happy.

ELISSA. Ah, it was so.
 Our sole misfortune is, we have been happy.
 We never shall be happy here again.

FESTUS. Nay, say not so. Let us be happy, now.
 Happy? To fling aside thy wavy locks,
 And feed upon thy white brow mine eyes ; to look
 Deep into thine, till mine I feel have drank
 Full of that soft wet fire which floats in them ;
 Eyes I would never leave, yet when most near
 Then, most astray, I ; nay, but to glance, as one
 Who hath eyed the inconceivable forms on high,—
 Where midst upon the beauty of thy breast
 Sits Love, like one between the cherubim ;
 To name thee, dream thee, but one moment mine
 Delights me more than all that earth can lend
 The good or bad, or heaven—

ELISSA. Oh name not heaven !
 With thoughts so foolish and so wrong.

FESTUS. What's wrong ?
 Shall my blood never bound 'neath beauty's touch,
 Heart throb, nor eye thaw with hers when her tears
 Drop quick and bright upon the glowing brow
 Bowed at her feet, because, forsooth, it is wrong ?
 Let it be wrong, it is wrong, it is wretchedness,
 I seek to suffer.

ELISSA. Nay, be calm. I never
 So love thee as when calm. Even then, 'tis strange !
 How dare we love each other as we do !

FESTUS. Give me some wine ; more wine. It pleasures me
 One's blood to impurple with the pall-black wine
 Of southern slopes, where years ago this grape
 Clustered mayhap o'erhead, and my brow screened
 With the strong dark shadows cast by lustier suns.
 Good, now. It feeds my will. And I have plans,
 Oh, plans ! 'twould take an age to execute,
 A realm to realise ; a world to undo.

ELISSA. Drink ; but the vintage of a hundred years

Would never slake shame's memory, heed thou well,
Nor quench the thirst of folly.

FESTUS. Fill again,
My beauty. Sing to me and make me glad.
Thy sweet words drop as softly upon the ear
As rose leaves on a well ; and I could listen,
As though the immortal melodies of heaven
Were wrought into one word, that word a whisper,
That whisper all I would from all I love.

ELISSA. I am not happy ; cannot sing. Thou lookest
Happy. Would I were !

FESTUS. The sun's body, they say,
Is dark, hard, hollow ; light but a floating fluid
Veiling him.

ELISSA. Ah ! how truly like man's heart ;
Most when, self-hid in passion's bright disguise,
Fraudful.

FESTUS. Dost moralize ? Oh, I'm with thee, there !

SERVANT (*entering*). A singer told to come is here.

FESTUS. Wilt hear him ?

ELISSA. Gladly, love. Bid him enter.

FESTUS. What hast there ?

SINGER. Oh, everything, I think.

FESTUS. Well anything

Will serve, this once.

SINGER. The last new song ?

FESTUS. Begin.

SINGER. Oh ! let not a lovely form
With feeling fill thine eye ;
Oh ! let not the bosom warm
At love-lorn lady's sigh ;
For how false is the fairest breast ;
How little worth, if true ;
And who would wish possessed,
What all must scorn or rue ?
Then pass by beauty with looks above ;
Oh ! seek never—share never—woman's love !

Oh ! let not a planet-like eye
Imbeam its tale on thine ;
In truth 'tis a lie—though a lie
Scarce less than truth divine.
And the light of its look on the young
Is wildfire with the soul ;
Ye follow and follow it long,
But find nor good nor goal.
Then pass by beauty with looks above ;
Oh ! seek never—share never—woman's love !

ELISSA. Methinks I must have heard that voice before.

FESTUS. And I, though I forget me where.

ELISSA. I, too.

SINGER. Oh ! let not a wildering tongue
Weave bright webs o'er thine ear ;
Nor thy spirit be said nor sung
To the air of smile or tear.

And say it hath melody far
 More than the spheres of heaven,
 Though to man and the morning star
 They sang, Ye be forgiven!
 Yet pass by beauty with looks above;
 Oh! seek never—share never—woman's love!

Oh! let not a soft bosom pour
 Itself in thine! It is vain.
 Love cheateth the heart, oh! be sure,
 Worse even than wine the brain.
 Then snatch up thy soul from his snare,
 Ere e'en from the goblet's brim,
 Thy lip; for the wise declare,
 There is none that can blind like him.
 Then pass by beauty with looks above;
 Oh! seek never—share never—woman's love!

FESTUS, Come hither, I would look on thee. I have seen
 Some one much like thee.

ELISSA. It was a brother, maybe?

SINGER. I have none, lady.

FESTUS. Go; but leave your song.

ELISSA. Go not as yet. Even yon unfolding door
 Hath cleared the sultry-passion'd air, which hangs
 Heavy as with idolatrous incense. Wait.
 There was a steadying coolness of the stars
 Came with those footsteps. Stay!—Again, I prithee.

FESTUS. Sing something burning, passionate, and sweet.
 For oh! I am in the mood to realize
 All deep and dear enjoyment. Trill away,
 The lilt perchance may dovetail with the time.

SINGER. Thou art for happiness with me.
 Love, love me as thou wilt!
 I care not, so I live with thee,
 For goodness or for guilt.
 I leave repentance to the weak,
 And to the good all gladness:
 I only feel, that while I speak,
 Reason to me seems madness.

This heart at once went wild for thee,
 While yet thou wert not mine;
 And now thine eye is law to me—
 Law human and divine.
 I leave despair to all who fail,
 Who love and lose thee, sadness;
 For what 'gainst beauty can avail,
 Which, moon-like, maketh madness?

Is this sufficient?

FESTUS. Ample, excellent.
 His words perplex me not a little. But now
 Bid him depart.

ELISSA. Let fate fulfil itself.

SERVANT. Here, follow me.

SINGER. Soft, friend. Await me here,
 While I assort my ditties, and concert
 What on re-entry may be just.

FESTUS. But I am even as a dog that fondles o'er,
And licks the wound he dies of. Would I could
Create or suffer within myself enough
Of love to kill.

ELISSA. Thou lovest one whom, maybe,
Thou oughtst not to have loved.

FESTUS. Love hath its own
Belief, own worship, own morality,
Own laws. It were better that all love were sin
Than that love were not. By-laws it must have,
Exceptions to earth's rules, and heaven's, not meaning
The good it doth, nor ill.

ELISSA. Oh, plead not thus ;
It is wrong, it is unjust, unkind.

FESTUS. It is.
But I am half mad and half dead with it.
I have loved thee till I can love nought beside.
My heart is drenched with love, as with a cloud
A sky aspiring hill. So much I have
Of lifefulness I seem to o'erlive myself.
I hate all things but thee ; shun men like snakes ;
Women, like pits. To me thou art all woman,
All life, all love, and more than all my kind.
I love thee more than I shall love and look for
Death, dare he take thee from me. But who dreams
Of death and thee together ?

ELISSA. I dream so, not
Rarely ; and know not but that now and again,
I would such dreams were verified. The best
Of all things are dreams realized.

FESTUS. Ah me !
Dreams such as gods may dream thy soul possess
For aye i' the Hadean Eden, death ; but here,
Me bless with love's divine reality.
So live we ever ; thou in thyself, with me
Happy ; and I of thee all wise, all blessed.
I have gone round the compass of all life
And can find nought worthy of thee. I but feel
That were I, as I ought to be, a god
I would sacrifice to thee the sun, in bright
And burning honour of thy love ; proof sought
Of mine oblation's worthfulness ; for know,
Miracles are not miracles with gods.

ELISSA. Dearer thou canst not be to me, unless
I die in telling how dear.

FESTUS. Mine ! be mine !
My soul is stung with thy beauty to the quick,
Oh but thou art too good or else too bad ;
Be colder or be warmer.

ELISSA. Leave me.

FESTUS. Well
It is most cruel, first to light the heart

With love completely, boundlessly ; and then,
 Moonlike, slowly to edge aside, and leave
 One only little line of all so bright,
 Once ; teach and unteach ; nay, to use more arts
 Than would outdo the devil of his throne,
 To make us ignorant of all we know ;
 To take the heart to pieces carefully ;
 For it is love alone can build the heart ;
 To root the tree up, 'neath whose shade we have lived,
 And give us back a sliver. Let it die.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Thus dares he brave fate's end. With her
 to reign

In passionate and imperial, solitude,
 Forbid, he would drive dominion from his mind,
 As drives the wind some day-besetting cloud
 Though ne'er so grand and gorgeous, down the skies,
 So he might soothe his heart with this new love
 And rest in peace. False peace ! not thus grants Heaven.
 Soul's blind devotion paid to passion's cause,
 Worthless, self-slaughter means, not sacrifice.
 She only shares pride's seat, pride banned—whose soul
 Turned prayerful Godwards, power can sanctify
 By teaching rule to serve. Haste, heaven, the hour.

ELISSA. Hark, he is coming.

FESTUS.

Who is coming ?

ELISSA.

He

Thou knowest, I wait for.

FESTUS.

No ! he cannot come ;

For I have driven an oath into his heart,
 And hanged a curse about his neck, might sink
 The Prince of Air to the centre.

ELISSA.

But thou saidst

He was to come, and at fixed time.

FESTUS.

I said so ?

I'm, sure, bewildered. Time it is indeed
 To do what most I am here to do.

GUARDIAN ANGEL.

Beware !

Oh ! I beseech thee. Nay, he hears me not,
 More than 'mid foamy turmoil of a sea
 Storm-lashed, is heard the sigh of land-locked gale,
 State-severed, hid in continents.

FESTUS.

All concurs.

With what malefic providence, will men say,
 Success hath covenanted with wrong. The hour
 Burns as it passes o'er me with a wing
 Stifling of fire, till all's done ; and we here
 Enjoy perfection. Have, have, cries a voice,
 As of a crowd within me. All one's life
 Lies past the vast horizon there, unseen,
 But must be sought and had. I would do aught
 To throw this dark desire which wrestles with me.
 It answers not to hold it at arm's length.

It must be hurled, dashed, trampled down, or see
 It soars, and all subdues. O lady, hear!
 Never did angel love his heaven, nor king
 Crown, as I thee. As some fire-hearted star,
 By beauteousness of sister sphere allured,
 His ancient seat mid everlasting space,
 And self-sufficing harmonies quits, to round
 Ceaseless, the idol orb, and to hers add
 His pomp of light subservient, nor would leave
 Such luminous vortex, but the unlidde eye
 Burns to her always.—I for thee, most fair!
 Mind's self rule, earth's forego; nor other end
 Seek than thyself.

ELISSA. But to what end? The world
 Is ripening with the plans thyself hast sown,
 And waits its reaper. Would not earth contend?

FESTUS. Let others notions fit them to our need.
 I have effaced my nature in the hope
 To conciliate love with fate. In vain! As might
 One resolute to die, the shore sought, cry
 To the wide embattled wave whose twin white arms,
 And stretched out fingers, streamy with latent light,
 All things before them conquering, at last, close,
 Arched like the bow of death, resplendent, 'Come,
 Wreck me with thine embrace, it is my doom.'
 So, to thy destinative hands, my brow
 Now circling as a moveable aureole, I
 My spirit reserveless trust.

ELISSA. See, now, the moon,
 As one whose soul, sole conversant with heaven,
 But by immortal memories saddened, still
 Considers silently the excuseful mirth
 Of wavelets in their twinkling play, and dance
 Of even the eternal elements, which will take
 Now, and once more their pleasure.

FESTUS. Oh! far off!
 That everlasting shimmering; 'tis indeed
 Too notable; and anon—

ELISSA. Yon fountain's fall!
 How sweetly it lulls the ear, and ringed in groves
 Of fragrant fruitage, and by showers, suspense
 And permanent, of the myrtle's pearly stars.
 Shocks not with love's own murmured words.

FESTUS. Peace, peace!
 I cannot grant tame audience, thou with me,
 To outward nature.

ELISSA. Think then of thine own.
 Nay, let me look then on the impassive hills,
 Their swell unchangeful, stirless rise and fall;
 The sea is all too mutable, and the moon.
 I breathe now, 'neath this trellis.

FESTUS. Breathe, and know

The might and truth of hearts is ne'er so shown
As in loving those we ought not, may be, love;
Or cannot have.

ELISSA. Let me not wrong thee, Festus.
Let me not think I have thought too well of thee;
And that to rebel 'gainst thee were heaven to obey.
What is't thou meditatest? Hast aught conceived
Would contrary God's ends? and edge aside
Thy path from duty and destiny?

FESTUS. I am here
To act, not ask, nor answer; to myself
I am henceforth sole responsible.

ELISSA. Alas!
I do begin to fear thee.

FESTUS. That were well.

ELISSA. Wouldst thou God's law and man's evade? Then
know,
I cannot fly the world; more than defy
Earth's bodily gravity; still less wouldst thou deem
Soul to disconsecrate?

FESTUS. Not a moment. Not
One spot thy shadow hallows. But these climes!
This plot of earth is all too mean, too tame,
Too moderate in its temperament; its range
Of act too average; nor enough profound
Its total rest. I love the pitiless sun;
Soil that reeks high with rankest fruitfulness;
Law such as lurks in storms; each day a day
Of history; and a sleep lawn-pillowed, now
'Neath moonlight, now in savage sun-blaze trapped;
Half down some steep ravine, safe hutted; lulled
By boom of waters, black with molten snows;
The passionate lands where women live to love,
And men 'twixt war and worship halve their days.

ELISSA. Is't thou sayst war?

FESTUS. I prate not now of peace;
But warring with myself, with heaven, with doom,
I reckon not were the world all war, and thou
Queen of the south, to head a hemisphere
Of foes against me challenging so the throne
Of a plight orb, I'd care not. Thee to bind
In bands of love triumphant, 'twere enough
For me, the great tradition's sum and close.

ELISSA. What dreadful words are these! What change hast
thou,
Change utter and unutterable, endured
In spirit, who once wert most humane of men
Not manwards sole, but towards all life. Be calm.
Truth, thou affrightest me.

FESTUS. Oh, I am calm,
As husbandman when midst the harvest field,
And the soft shadelets thrown by autumnal moons

From sheaf and shock, he eyes the ungarnered pile,
 Buildd breast high, shake to his pausing foot,
 Anticipative of whitest wealth. Nay, see ;
 Calm as the heartiest circlet of a wheel,
 Whose visible movement's lost, to myself I seem
 Still, absolutely. O feel my pulse ; I'm calm ;
 Breathless.

ELISSA. We trifle.

FESTUS. Trifle then no more.

Let us away, away ! Yon innocent orb
 Sacred, sequestrate, virgin of the skies,
 Us following, with her patient power shall tend
 Our homeward track nor leave us till we reach,
 With thy fair following, holiest peace.

ELISSA. I cannot.

Thou wouldst dethrone my will, and bid me trudge
 A beggar queen o'er earth. But know my will
 As thine free, free to love thee an' I choose,
 Despite thy proud disloyalty, thy peer ;
 But not my sacred will to efforce. Away !

FESTUS. Oh say not so. Slay me at once, I die.
 I look upon thy beauty, and forget,
 As in a dream of drowning all things else.
 Right, wrong, seem one, seem nothing. Thou art beauty ;
 That beauty everything. Speak not. It may be
 I shall look on thee as looks the sun on earth,
 Until like him I gaze myself away
 From heaven. But if thou wouldst I look no longer,
 Change then the action of thy loveliness,
 Lest long same-seemingness should send me mad.
 Blind me with kisses. I would ruin sight,
 To give its virtue to those lips whereon
 I would die now or ever live. Away !
 For as wearied wanderer snow-blinded, sinks,
 And swoons upon the swelling drift and dies ;
 So on that dazzling bosom would I lay
 These famished lips, and end their wanderings there.
 Come, let us balk the future of its end
 Hoped for, forfeared by some. Oh ! I'll be all
 Thou ask'st for in the coming, placable, calm,
 Most moderate, most amenable to right ;
 But know the present pressant ! know, I still
 Am earnest, still resolved ; and shall I now
 For scare of covetise, and the curt commands
 Of law, whose thunderous negatives awe the world,
 And pale the lips of weekly posturists,
 Shall I cheat thee, bonny heart of mine, of this
 Thy long expected spoil ? No, minion, no !
 But if meanwhile thy word hope certify
 With promise of thyself ;—what ! not appeased ?
 Nay, rage not, dove of mine !—ferocious dove !

ELISSA. Be as thou wert. What will become of us ?

FESTUS. Be mine, be me, be aught but so far from me.
 Let us from hence. The south expects our feet
 With tremulous burnings. Winds await our flight,
 Breathless, till hailed. My heart is numb with ire
 Of love. I rage to be with thee where none
 Can eye or awe us, of the incarnate world.
 All nature waits our will, all skill of art.
 Our sloop in moonshade hid, beyond yon crag,
 Impatient, rocks from head to heel, to hear
 One footstep crash the beach ! For thy dear sake,
 The world may go a begging for a king.
 And say, we jilt our destiny, and so void
 Their ends who would foreclose earth's leading life ;
 What ail we ? length of rapturous days our own,
 And respited humanity ? It were something
 Both earth and heaven, hell aidant, to defeat ;
 Defeat the stars 'gainst us concoursed.

ELISSA. Alas !
 Alas ! I dread thee now.

FESTUS. Nay, fear not me.
 Whither we wend, once there, while earth attends
 The marvellous rumour, blessings not, nor banns
 Shall lack, nor unspanned leisure ; quashed all hopes
 Of abnegated empire, what shall be
 Ours, but love boundless, sateless ?

ELISSA. Listen !
 FESTUS. No !

I list to no conditions, here nor now.
 Give me thyself. Rise, come with me, with me !
 Surely, some whirlwind waits to lackey us hence !

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Where art thou, Lucifer ? Part them !
 LUCIFER. Is't my part

To order, or hinder fate ? As yet, let be.

FESTUS. Far off, on the obscure disk of earth, is mine
 Originally by sword-right of my sires,
 Upon a mountain spur which dips its foot
 Death-deep in the sea, a stern stronghold, that boasts,
 In ruinous luxury, still sufficing state,
 An exiled tyrant liberally to guest,
 And all his wastrel court ; high peaked, far back
 Snows everduring blanch ; below, thick woods
 Lush leaved, broad fanned, fruit breedful, stretch ; and there,
 All night around the crowns of favourite palms,
 Their winged and intricate reel, the fireflies,—sparks
 Vivid, as 'twere of life's divinity, weave,
 Mocking the star-maze ; and in rapid act
 Of light, self regulative, law heed nor need,
 Being of surpassing nature ; there, too, pour,
 From their encoigning huts, leaf-roofed, when dews
 And shadows thicken at mid-moon, for dance,
 Feastful, hot-breath'd, the lithe and dusky array
 Who call me master, adulative, and mouth

Maybe a common creed ; but coyly, adore,
 Some uncouth idolet to their glebe adstrict,
 With whom I have whiles done battle ; there, with me,
 Most excellentest of things, be thou their pride,
 Their providence, their supreme ! Nay, linger not,
 See, all the way is water. Moons but three
 Shall waste their light upon our flamy wake,
 Ere we are there : there rest in lavish peace
 And pall-less pleasures. Oh it is not for me
 Enough to have gazed and doted on thee until
 Mine eye is dazzled, and brain dizzied. Thou
 All worship must exhaust ; it is not enough
 That in long dreams my soul hath torrent-like,
 Swept this majestic make ; nor, that it now
 Fails in the sight of heaven and thee, nay, falls
 As a summer sunset, seawards, hot and tired
 With the o'erlong day, that slowly degrades itself
 Of absolute beauty to a noteless mass
 Uncomeliest of all things—reck I. The cost,
 The fine, I have summed, and yet have sworn to fill,
 Sometime, mine arms with bliss.

ELISSA. Sit, Festus !

LUCIFER. Friends !

Did ye not know me ? No ! Then know me now.

ELISSA. It was he.

FESTUS. Thou—

LUCIFER, Hush ; thou art not to utter what
 I am. Bethink thee : it was our covenant.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Man from thyself saved though as 'gainst thy
 will,

Give thanks thou mayst for life snatched from remorse,
 And sin's soul-blinding sophistries : and learn
 How even by the hands of evil God worketh good,
 Nor dream his fates can fail, or plans succeed
 Without his part of the fortune.

FESTUS. I, content,
 Submit me to the award of God.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Farewell.

LUCIFER. Thee, lady, said I, once, I again would see.

ELISSA. Thou didst, and I must thank thee. Waiting here
 Thy visit, all uncharmed by the ripple of seas
 On summer eve, moonlit, 'twere well I staid
 To render back to thee my troth, or one,
 Too daring thoughtless, would have borne me off
 Whither I know not, might have smirched a name
 Though meaning not, that shall be stainless still.
 'Twas wrong, but I forgive. He hears me not.

LUCIFER. I hear. Thou knowest what once I was to thee—
 One who for love of one I loved, for thee,
 Would have done or borne the sins of all the world ;
 Who did thy bidding at thy lightest look
 And had it been to have snatched an angel's crown,

Off his bright brow, as he sate singing, throned,
 I would have cut these heart strings that tie down
 My spirit, and spite of thunder and sacrilege,
 Had laid it at thy feet. I loved thee, lady.
 I am one whose love was greater than the world's,
 And might have vied with God's ; a boundless ring
 All pressing upon one point, that point thy heart.
 And now, but should I call on my revenge ;
 It were at hand in armies. But thou art woman ;
 And I forget my purpose and my wrongs
 In looking, and in loving.

ELISSA. Was it sin
 To have loved once ignorantly ?

LUCIFER. Oh, hear her heaven.
 There is no blasphemy in love, but doubt ;
 No sin but to deceive.

FESTUS. Then is she sinless.
 Thy heart's embrace though close was snakelike cold.
 And mine was warm, and more, was welcome.

LUCIFER. Patience ;
 Of thee I spake not, cared not, thought not, I.
 Be sure, it was not from reverence for thee,
 I saved ye, but for her sake and mine own.
 I have excused so much there is little left
 To make more words about ; but, for the future,
 I would almost vow, so variable it seems,
 It were as well expect to entice a star
 To perch upon one's finger, or the wind
 To follow one like a dog, as think to fix
 To aught a woman's heart. Answer me not.
 Let me say what I have to say, and go.
 Thou art all will and passion, that is thine
 Excuse and condemnation.

ELISSA. While that will
 Was turned towards thee, thou saw'st in it no harm.

LUCIFER. Oh I have heard what rather than have heard
 I would have stopped mine ears with thunder ; words
 That have gone singing through my soul, as arrows
 Through the air, their death-song.

ELISSA. Not from me expect
 Defence, nor accusation. Both I scorn.

LUCIFER. Now, let us part, or I shall die of wrath.

ELISSA. Part then.

LUCIFER. Thank God it is for eternity.

ELISSA. I do. Away.

LUCIFER. Festus, I wait for thee.
 I have fulfilled the word between us passed
 So far as is permitted me. Look back !
 There is little unaccomplished.

FESTUS. One thing yet.

LUCIFER. And that mayhap anon. Wouldst rather power
 To sow in millions or in units reap ?

FESTUS. Spirit, beyond compute, beyond compare,
Both I must have.

LUCIFER. So then, this womanish love,
Brain-feebling, heart unmanning sentiment,
Must be put by, which is to neither gain,
Honour, nor need nor meed. Enough of love.
True, it hath served a purpose with myself;
Although constrained the very end to avert
All forecast had led up to. Nor in this
Seemed I myself quite, but as urged by power
Unseen, resistless.

FESTUS. Well, I will think of it.

LUCIFER. It is thought and done with. Soon, 'twill lead thee
whither

Thou shalt behold more marvels than man e'er
Hath known; perceive earth spirit-wise, and know
All nature tributary.

FESTUS. 'Twere well; in time.

LUCIFER. Said I, in this strange deed, I to myself
Seemed not myself, quite? But though baffled here,
By what a good deed seems, one cipher less
In the great evil's boundless deficiency,
It were base to flee the field, one chance yet left.
If in the lure of power, my next, he fail
Self-magnifying, he forfeits all.

FESTUS. But now,—

And come! thou art not the first deceived in love;
Yet is not love so much love as a dream
Of madness, whence we wake, scared and astound
To find that what we have loved, must love, is not
That we had meant to love; and all we deemed
To be, proves nought;—from each, like guerdon reaped.

LUCIFER. Well, doubtless well.

FESTUS. Perhaps I profited
Too much by thy good lessons.

LUCIFER. Lady, ere
I hence, grant yet one favour. Take this rose
Fresh from its parent stem; make much of it;
And as it fades, let all remembrance fade
Of him who gave.

ELISSA. I cast it down at once.
The eagle needs no omens who to all
Himself is ominous; and not with me
Shall memory, like a whirlpool 'neath a fall,
Whose watery resurrection scares the bold,
Revolve the mangled moments of the passed
In wearisome dissolution: no! at once—

LUCIFER. The furies hint it, let the fates advise.
Take heed. A nobler life may sometime cross
The path of spirit perplexed, intempest;—
Inexorable; and like that—

FESTUS. Go. I follow.

LUCIFER. Now therefore would I wager, and I might
The great archangel's trump to a dog-whistle
That whatsoever happens, worse ensues.

FESTUS. Even the unwise may prophesy, now and then.
Forgive, love, him ; and me forgive for all.

ELISSA. Yes, I forgive. What is there not and whom
That I forgive not ? Let me be forgiven
By the Great Spirit in death as I, in life,
Pardon who would me wrong, if such soul live.
The love which giveth all, forgiveth aught.
And thou to me art more than earth or heaven.
They have but given me life, thou gavest love ;
The lord of life, thou my life, love, and lord.
Take me again, my kindest, dearest, best.
Him who hath gone I never loved like thee.
Was in his eye a desolation, seemed
To prey upon all the light, whate'er, in mine.
But it is passed ; and he with it. I think
I know, thou lovest me.

FESTUS. And I think, as now,
For perfect love there should be but one god,
One worshipper.

ELISSA. We know the gods of old
Worshipped each other, equal deities.
For the poets surely spake the truth of gods
Who dare not speak but truth.

FESTUS. O breathing beauty,
Bards seek ideally, dost believe the gods
Of old, toys, terrors, of an infant world ?

ELISSA. If I do not believe, I scorn them not.
Nay, I could mourn for them and pray for them.
I can scorn nought a nation's honest heart
Hath held for ages holy : for the heart
Is alike holy in its strength and weakness.
All things to me are sacred that have been ;
And though earth, like a stream, blood-streaked, which tells
A long and silent tale of wrongful death,
May mostly, blush her history, and her eyes
Hide, yet the passed is sacred ; it is God's ;
Not ours ; let her, let us, do better, now.

FESTUS. O re-inspired, retowered in spirit, arise ;
Go mate thee with the stars ; thou art not made
For mortal 'spousals. Tears all gone, all dead.
All dubiousness, beams forth thy soul again.
Lo ! there are veins of diamonds in thine eyes,
Might furnish crowns for all the queens of earth.
Oh ! I could sooner price the sun, than set
A value earth could pay, upon thy look.
Look ! I would rather look upon thee one minute,
Than a whole day on Paradise ;—such days
As are, and only, in heaven. But now I have seen
Fate's all compelling nod, and must away

What wilt thou? Is there aught dost fear?

ELISSA.

I dread

But too long separation; nothing else.

FESTUS. Would I could more assure thee than by words.

ELISSA. When heaven and earth were first betrothed, they brake
The rainbow 'tween them as a ring, for each
A part, in token of their troth-plight, till
Their sacred bridals, when both fragments oned,
It shall conclude the eternal covenant.

But we, we need no signal, need we?

FESTUS.

None.

Here have I fixed my rest. It may be none
Shall compass all the ends he hopes, in gift
Of hands divine sole; but for the destiny,
Mightiest, which e'er awaited man, earth's crown,
I spurn it for thy sake; renounce.

ELISSA.

For me?

I fear me, love of power is more than power
Of love were't tried.

FESTUS.

Till tried, 'twere well to trust.

But I have heard the call I must obey.

It hastens me away.

ELISSA.

And am I nothing?

Who masters not his fate is weak indeed.

FESTUS. What if by serving thee, I vanquish mine?

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Vain boast; thou canst not God resist, his
eye

Foreseeing, preordains what comes to pass.

FESTUS. We are the lords of our own destiny, we;
Our own fates, furies, graces. All the gods
Are we to ourselves because we love.

ELISSA.

Nay, tremble.

Thou utterest treasonable truth against
The dead divinities.

FESTUS.

Who shall reconcile

Their powers, or 'venge their slighted worship.

ELISSA.

God.

For the divine, though dimlier, being of old
As now, adored, what 'gainst our sense of God
Sins, chiefliest pride, heaven alway punisheth
With death or madness.

FESTUS.

Nay, convert me quite.

Thou art at heart, a pagan.

ELISSA.

I am one

In whose free faith the truth, whate'er, is holy,
And what is good is sacred.

FESTUS.

I am too.

ELISSA. I cannot bid thee hence. Nay, sit. From thee
Parted, I feel as a tree might feel, half riven,
And my soul acheth to spring to,—as thus.

FESTUS. Still must I loose these arms; and while heart-filled
With memories of sweet thefts, a thousand years

In Saturn, nor ten thousand in the sun
 Approximative to bliss, should rob me of,
 My parting gift I know thou wilt not refuse ;
 Nor would I proffer aught which emblemed less
 Than life celestial and the light divine.
 Expect me ere it wither ; ere the scent,
 Sweet effluence of its perfectness of leaf,
 Hath fled its starry censer, look for me.
 Let the death-destined perish. We shall live.

ELISSA. My life is one long loving thought of thee.
 If any ask me what I do, I say,
 I love.

FESTUS. All that ? It is enough. Farewell !

ELISSA. And he is gone ! and the world seems gone with him.
 Shine on, ye heavens ; why can ye not impart
 Light to my heart, dark as death's mantling wing ?
 Bright, beauteous, but unfeeling, may be, even
 To those who love ye, are ye nought like us ?
 Or, why then, bright, I, so unhappy ? Is it,
 That gladdening in the light which was, ere time,
 And seeing all, ye count not this as aught ?
 Yet would not I my woes untold, unthought,
 Unseen o' the world, blind lightnings which still strike
 With secret scathe and fiery, make more plain
 Even to you, sweet stars ; nor change, for thrice
 The joys of others ; since they are, love, for thee.
 Our very wretchedness grows dear to us
 Suffering for one we love. Or, can it be,
 That, bright and deathless both, ye have too much
 Of beauty for us, mortal ? and, now curbed,
 The impetuous beam that else might blind, now checked,
 Our mistimed aspirations for your seats,
 Bid note that yet your silvery silence tells
 More than man's goldenest utterances of Heaven ?
 Bright through all ages therefore ye may know
 Beauty, oh yes, too much, that consciousness
 Of absolute loveliness which doth make, men say,
 Unhappy all who see it, all who have.
 And were it true, read we our fate in you,
 Who, hailed of old Divinities, on man's birth
 Your premier rays ascendant, sages deem
 So fraught with virtue as life's both extremes
 To tinge with dye of destiny, come our turn,
 We, seers more veritable, diviners born
 With more of Heaven in us than ye, your course,
 Your doom, forefix ; our brief mortality more
 To God the Eternal than your starry years ;
 Though brightness be not always happiness,
 Or wisdom were not sad, with ages rife.
 And many as are your life rays space-pervading,
 Strange witness bear ye with ourselves to one,
 All wise, who in things remote as stars and souls

Our thought-link unitive planned, All-being God !
 Who art, by cause, in all things, and in whom,
 By act and law all maybe, then best loved,
 As thou by them best worshipped, spiritwise,
 Whom commune, soul to soul, with thee, makes gods ;
 Let us believe that if thou gavest earth
 For our bodies, then the stars were for our souls,
 For perfect beauty, love unbounded, joy
 Ceaseless, and everlasting life with thee ;
 Let us believe they look upon us here,
 As their inheritors, and save themselves
 For us, as we for thee, and thou for all.

XXXIII.

Count not the ripples upon life's stream, our days ;
 Nor eddying errors as a change misdeem
 Of current ; mark thou wiselier, the main flow
 Of ever Godward being. The hand supreme
 Outreaching all, guides to a term unthought.
 Contrition makes confession ; penitence draws
 Pardon. So, thoughts once sinfullest abjured,
 Dawn shows of the true life. The downward node
 Turned, begins reascent : for God, with whom
 His Holy angels' prayers prevail, ordains
 The peccant spirit to view and visit hell :
 That this, of punitive flames, invisible,
 Assured, but all potential, thence to man
 Might bring his gladmost tidings back, and prove,
 How justest judgment trines at once with God's
 Love, and the soul's amendment.

Rocks and Sands by the Sea-shore.

FESTUS and GUARDIAN ANGEL.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Here break for good the bonds of silence.

Once

Again we may as erst sweet commune hold.
 I have spoken already, and once more by God's will
 Bid thee despair not, but with penitence hear
 The counsels of the All-wise, and fate's decree.
 The anguish of thy heart, thy tears, sighs, groans,
 Have reached God. Wouldst thou aught confess ?

FESTUS.

O angel !

How dared I think to thwart God's thought ? or 'scape
 The law inevitable of destined doom ?
 I hate, I loathe, I curse, condemn myself
 To righteous penance and heart-scourging fires
 Of sharp remorse for aye.

GUARDIAN ANGEL Thy better self

So bids, retributively just. Thou knowest
Wherein thou hast failed ; in this one test, the crown
Of good's conflict with evil, thou art proven
Losel, and all thy heavenly guidance foiled ;
Myself aggrieved, dishonoured. Now, as of old,
Triumphant towers the tempter. Urge no more
Mean exculpations one keen thought, truth-edged,
Of conscience scatters.

FESTUS. Be it so, angel. I
Have sinned ; erred wilfully ; wronged right ; succumbed
To a base temptation fiend-forged in my heart ;
The inlight quenched, which every soul illumines,
God's witness in the spirit, and inmost seal,
Blurred o'er with passionate fire.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Confession clears
The conscience ; and it is well. Though but in mood
What's done thou canst not now undo ; for thought
Is mind's act, but 'twixt thought and outward deed
As 'twixt heaven's polar stars, lies the whole world.

FESTUS. How was't I failed ? How came it sin's rank breath
The cool calm air of virtue dared defile ?
Oh I have lost my starry seat in heaven ;
Lost God's approving smile.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Nay, God indeed
Hath suffered this, hath led thee to the abyss
Of all deceptive nature, thee to show
Its ruinous depths, no hand save his alone
Can lift from. Thou hast sinned, sinned, open-eyed,
But in thought only and passion. Let such strange pass
Life carnal from life spiritual demark,
This henceforth thine.

FESTUS. It shall be, heavenly one !
Let the passed life-state perish. Be it with me,
As when some soft and sleepy summer scene
Of nature, framed before us, we, with the view
Content, like passive, like indifferent, gaze
Listless ; all secondary shades of things
Immingling, show confusedly ; hill, vale, plain,
The rivulet's gentle curve, the tremulous slope
O' the wood, the unlevel outline of far hills,
Just dusking air, all blend in light diffuse
Indefinite ;—suddenly, a masklike cloud,
Creeping mid-sky, the sun surprises ; straight,
As 'twere God's staff, a light-shaft, sharp, severe
Strikes earth, and lo ! the unmoralled mixture ends ;
The face of things shows changed ; shapes all transformed,
Dark things grow darker, brightlier glow things bright ;
The o'ersmiling world's frail witchery, and her craft
Inequitable of tolerance, fails, collate
With that just spear-beam ; so this knowledge, now
Inlanced into my soul by conscience, makes
Not only truth more amiable, but shows

Of good and ill the eternal severances.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. It is well. Be verified thy resolves! and
graved

On thy soul's frontlets, that remembering how
Of old thou failedst, and yet wast not forsook,
Thou mayst be wise; recalling, too, how they
Who wisdom willed but for themselves, and mere
Preeminence in the world, friend, lover, both
Untimely, perished; thou alone, self-trained
Sagelier, albeit unwittingly, to ends
Happier and nobler, even to serve, preserved.
Yet boast not, nor presume. In souls, forgiven
Of God, his chosen anointed, he, and they
Regenerate, make one being, their spirits which live
And thrive by holiest miracles, while here
Made pure by conscience, penitence, love of good
And hate of ill, restoratives of soul,
Shall reap at last divine reception there,
Presume not yet, nor boast. Not yet thy lot
Exhausted; or for man's sake, or thine own.
God's will o'errules his own appointed fates.

FESTUS. Was this my sin foreset?

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Original sin's

A figment of man's brain. Pure come we all,
Angels and men, from God. And though by flesh
Soul-soiled, our own and others' faults; life's needs;
Its passions, vanities, selfishness; and numbed
By ebb of moral energies, the force
Essential, as thy privileged eye hath proved,
To itself, among spirit-spheres instructive, fined
By sense of truth, and reasonably convert
To God's demand of penitent betterment,
Self-sown in the spirit, deterrent of all sin,
All carnal aims, or more, deterrent, yet
Shall win its ultimate heaven, and rest in God,
Whose throne is world-wide. God therefore, pray thou.
Thy forerun thought of evil intent, frustrate
By mean so marvellous, be not actual sin
Against thy soul adjudged; but, cloudlet-like,
That steals through heaven, nor shadow leaves below,
The unfixed fault may pass dissoluble,
Nor thy closed page, dread angel of the pen!
Darken: and I mine orisons adding, too,
Will both present in heaven.

FESTUS. Be thou my soul's

Kind keeper. Pray for me. For me remains
One only course, the step towards heaven.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. It may

Be arduous, but 'tis life.

FESTUS. Oh, yes! 'tis life.

All else unsafe, in this to act's to live.
As some belated cliff-climber,—his track

Homewards, tide-swept, at foot of columned crag
 Reared with its fellow jambwise, like blind gates
 Hadeän, to mask earth's inmost,—halted, eyes
 Shudderingly, all round, the death-expectant sea;
 The ascent, limb perilling; and, reflective, knows
 One sole safe path, that, upwards;—to the feat
 Girds him unanxious, and so climbing climbs
 Now, by sheer slopes unpunctuate to the edge;
 Now clinging to grim steeps,—the lichen gray
 Scarce closelier; steeps that in the paling light
 Smile treacherous welcome, even as death might smile,
 Petting the plumes of some surprised soul;—now,
 Coasting the chasm which laughs the sea-hawk's home,
 And her brown broodlings, ragged with flickering down,
 From human foot, till he, rock-swarmer, clutch
 Breathless, the bleak, black top; all daylight spent,
 Save one poor sack of gold the unthrifty sun,
 Decamped, hath dropped by the tent-pegs of the sky;
 And prostrate, wordless, but with welling eyes
 Thanks heaven; so I, too, haunted by a god,
 Like one of old, who yields my soul no rest,
 Bear me, till I in him attain the sum
 Of peace and safety.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Mayst thou even attain!
 Thus heart-wrung, thus soul-humbled, know God wills
 Thou make of hell foreproof in conscience; view
 The fate foredoomed for one who wilful sins;
 And voluntary, visit with him who owns
 And strives to extend, hell's stern domains. There, reigns
 Nathless, thou wilt find, eternal equity,
 And justest law; sin's graduate chastisement,
 The harmonic bonds 'twixt fault and fine, and there,
 Man's mind, disrupt from self-deceits shall show
 Time's wasted faculties still used to ends
 Emendative of soul. There, all God's ways,
 To nature's reconciled, prove thou not more just
 Than amiable; so, gladdening man and earth.
 There, too, I meet thee, delegated of Heaven.

FESTUS. I go. Adieu!

GUARDIAN ANGEL. When out of night leapt light,
 Not weightier seemed the event than now from this,
 The good, the glory. One fault 'twas wrought man's fall;
 This act, the rise of angels; so o'erruled
 To good, all evil beneath the hand of God.

FESTUS. Be it mine to enjoy or suffer, as decreed.

XXXIV.

In such time

As it takes to turn a leaf, we are in heaven ;
 Making our way among the wheeling worlds,
 Millions of suns, half infinite each, and space,
 For ever shone into, for ever dark,
 As deity, to and by created mind ;
 Upborne by the companion spirit, who held,
 As tempter, now, by God, enlightener, now
 But servant ever, in grasp unloosenable
 The nature shows of the All in One ; whence evil,
 And its necessity, mystery none to man's
 Enlightened reason only in sin condemned
 As voluntary ; but mediate in all life,
 Betwixt its source and end ; the angels' fall,
 Originated, essentially, as man's,
 And creature's perfectness how impossible
 Until made one with God ; from whom all law.
 For law not more than matter can itself
 Create, or act might being's self precede.
 One ultimate force intelligent, therefore, is,
 One primal self sufficing infinite.

Interstellar Space.

FESTUS and LUCIFER.

FESTUS. Why, earth is in the very midst of heaven !
 Albeit well-nigh invisible, and space,
 Though void of things feels full of God. Hath space
 No limit ?

LUCIFER. None to thee ; yet, infinite,
 Would equal God ; which cannot be.

FESTUS. Yet not,
 Infinite, how can God therein exist ?

LUCIFER. I say not.

FESTUS. No. So soon when placed beside
 The infinite, the poor immortal fails.

LUCIFER. It is God contains the infinite, not that God.
 Space is God's space : eternity is his
 Eternity ; his, heaven. He only holds
 Perfections, which are but the impossible
 To other beings.

FESTUS. We are things of time.

LUCIFER. With God time is not. Unto him all is
 Present eternity. Worlds, beings, years,
 With all their natures, powers, and events,
 The range whereof when making he ordains,
 Unfold themselves like flowers. He foresees
 Not, but sees all at once. Time must not be
 Contrasted with eternity : it is not
 A second of the everlasting year.
 Perfections, although infinite with God,

Are all identical ; as much of him—
 And holy is his mercy, merciful
 His wisdom, wise his love, and kind his wrath—
 As form, extension, parts, are requisites
 Of matter. Spirit hath no parts. It is
 One substance, whole and indivisible,
 Whatever else. Souls see each other clear
 At one glance, as two drops of rain in air
 Might look into each other, had they life.
 Death doth away disguise.

FESTUS. Even here I feel
 Among these mighty things, that, as I am,
 I am akin to God ;—that I am part
 Of the use universal, and can grasp
 Some portion of that reason within whose scope
 The whole is ruled and founded ;—that I have
 A spirit nobler in its cause and end,
 Lovelier in order, greater in its powers,
 Than all these bright immensities—how swift !
 And doth creation's tide for ever flow,
 Nor ebb with like destruction ! World on world
 Are they for ever heaping up, and still
 The mighty measure never full ?

LUCIFER. To act
 Is power's habit : always to create,
 God's ; which, thus ever causing worlds, to him
 Nought cumbrous more than new down to a wing,
 Aye multiplies at once my power and pain.
 I have seen many frames of being pass.
 This generation of the universe
 Will soon be gathered to its grave. These worlds,
 Which bear its sky-pall, soon will follow thine.
 I, both. All things must die.

FESTUS. What are ye orbs ?
 God's words—the scriptures of the skies ? for words
 With him cannot be passing, nor less vast,
 Less real, nor less glorious than yourselves.
 The world is God's great poem ; and the worlds
 The words it is writ in ; and we souls, the thoughts.
 Ye cannot die.

LUCIFER. Think not on death. Here all
 Is life, light, beauty. Harp not so on death.

FESTUS. I cannot help me, spirit ! Chide no more.
 As who dare gaze the sun, doth after see
 Betwixt him and else, a dark sun in his eye ;
 So I, once having braved my burning doom,
 See nought beside, or that in everything.
 Hark ! what is that I hear ?

LUCIFER. An angel weeping.
 Earth's guardian angel ; she is always weeping.

FESTUS. See where she flies spirit-lorn round the heavens,
 Like a forefeel of madness about the brain.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Stars, stars !

Stop your bright cars !
 Stint your breath ;
 Repent ere worse ;
 Think of the death
 Of the universe.
 Fear doom, and fear
 The fate of your kin-sphere.
 As a corse in the tomb
 Earth ! thou art laid in doom.
 The worm is at thy heart.
 I see all things part :—
 The bright air thicken,
 Thunder-stricken ;
 Birds from the sky
 Shower like leaves ;
 Streamlets stop,
 Like ice on eaves.
 The sun go blind ;
 Swoon the wind
 On the high hill-top,
 Swoon and die.
 Earth rear off her cities
 As a horse his rider ;
 And still with each death-strain,
 Her heart-wound tear wider.
 The dead rise ;
 Death dies.
 Go, time, and sink
 Thy great thoughts in the sea,
 And quench thy red link.
 Let him flutter to rest
 On thy god-nursing breast,
 Eternity ;
 Mother Eternity,
 What is for me ?

FESTUS. Poor angel ! ah, it is the good most suffer.
 Look ! like a cloud she hath wept herself away.
 Yon central sphere supreme of spirit create,
 Immediate seeming most to deity, draws
 With irresistible force.

LUCIFER. Thereto we tend.

FESTUS. What of this world we view, and all yon worlds ?
 If God made not the whole from nothing, how
 Is he creator ? Somewhat must exist
 Else, with himself eternal, nor had all things
 In him their origin.

LUCIFER. All being he makes
 Of his own nature manifestive ; each day
 Is born a new creation ; the infinite
 Expands perpetually, new formed ; all orbs
 Have their revealed law ; and every race

Of being hath had its judgment, or shall have.

FESTUS. The infinite reach of dark and vacuous space !
Oh, let me rest, be it but a moment's pause
Remember still my spirit toils in guise
Aërial, shadowy.

LUCIFER. Alight then on this orb,
Central of heaven's great system, and the seat
Recipient of the virtues of all stars.

FESTUS. Are all these worlds then stocked with souls like man's,
Free, fallible, and sinful ?

LUCIFER. Listen. Although
All things be perfect relatively, with God
All is imperfect absolutely. No room's
In his forecounsel for repentance ; none
For acts emendative. Grow not in his hand
From fabulous chaos, stars ; nor needs he learn,
By slow degrees, to separate elements
From jumbled contraries. The heavenly spheres
Show not as shapeless lumps on rumbling roads
Time scarce hath time to level ere lo ! they end ;
But bright and glib from the creative hour
Orb, orbit to each other apt, all life
Intelligent, admires ; and knows the mind
Omniscient lacks not schooled experience' lore.
Him can events instruct who all events
Foreorders to their end ? Nor yet with him
Who for his own good pleasure all hath made,
All life pervades, perpetuates and conducts,
Lieth necessity more than freedom. These
On spirit create, imperfect, only act.
As every living thing upon earth sustains,
Unconscious, weight enorme of aëry leaguos,
Their inner life-power thus enabling them ;
So by the force of freedom self-conceived,
The spatial pressure of necessity
Man bears with equal mind, as paired with fate,
And inwardly divine. So I with him.

FESTUS. 'Tis well in souls created room is found
For some self-bettering impulse. Spirits how else
So feeble, and so defectible, see restored ?

LUCIFER. All creature minds like man's are fallible.
The seraph who in heaven highest stands,
May fall to ruin deepest. God is mind ;
Pure, perfect, sinless ; man imperfect, is,
Momently sinning. Evil then results
From imperfection. The idea of good
Is owned in imperfection's lowest form.
God would not, could not make aught wholly ill ;
Nor aught not like to err. Man never was
Perfect nor pure, or so he would be even now.
Thy nature hath some excellencies ; these,
By mean proclivities, oft, and wicked wiles

Thwarted, albeit in kind necessitate
As change in nature, or as shade to light.
No darkness hath the sun, no weakness God
These only be the faulty attributes
Of secondary natures, planets, men.
God's are not attributes by creature mind
From his essential separable, or such
Not limitless, him would mix with that he hath made.
God is all God, as life is that which lives.
A mighty spirit am I ; yet what to light
Is lightning? Lightning maybe one thing slays :
Light makes all live. Thy necessary defects
Bear thou with grace ; thy self inflicted ills
Quell as thou canst. No positive estate
Is evil, or principle, wholly for its form
And measure due to defect, defect to good.
Good's the sole positive principle in the world.
It is only thus that what God makes, he loves,
And must. Ill's limited. None can form a scheme
For universal evil ; not even I.

FESTUS. Can imperfection from perfection come? Can God make aught defective?

LUCIFER. How aught else ?
But three proportions are there in all things ;
The greater—equal—less. God could not make
A god above—nor equal—with—himself,
By nature and necessity the Highest.
So, if he make, it must be lesser minds,
Lower and less, from angels down to men,
Whose natures are imperfect, as his own
All perfect must be. These two states are not
Except as whole to its parts opposed ; and evil's
Itself no ill, unless creation be.

FESTUS. Is God the cause of evil?

LUCIFER. So far as evil
From imperfection comes, and the imperfect
From things he hath made, and these come from his will
To make, be it said, if reverently, he is.

FESTUS. Then imperfection goes back past man's fall?

LUCIFER. Goes to the veriest verge of being create
And nature's rise.

FESTUS. Speak.

LUCIFER. All was peace in heaven
When God to the assembled angels showed
His future ends towards man, not yet create.
Some, I and mine, his wisdom in that end
Misdoubt; and as we doubted, a dim film
Shadowy, o'erspread the spirit; and we felt
Dark, and first knew ourselves from God diverged,
Excentric to the universal soul;
First knew ill's relative existence; knew
Foreseeingly the strife which should pervade

Creation, then begun, which we were doomed
 To wage for ever ; its final cause, and how
 To be transformed and righted and made ground
 Of greater glory, knew not ; of that end
 Still dubious ; our conclusive ignorance,
 In common with creation, of the mode
 And reason to that endwards being a curse,
 Inevitable appearing save by death.
 But how, immortal, die ? Ere yet one act
 Had faintest thought interpreted, o'er heaven
 Fell down a volumed darkness, night of night,
 Thick as a thousand palls, were earth the bier.
 For God upon his throne had frowned. When fled
 The blackness of that strangeness, lo ! we stood,
 Who erred, disjoined by line impalpable,
 But ah ! impassable, from all in heaven.
 The seed of sin expanded, as thought swift,
 As love light. Self in lieu of God remains
 In all their souls who sin, self, deified.
 Evil is multitudinous. God is one.
 But though the sum of evil, in myself
 Not whole or absolute ill, I ; for to live
 Is of itself a predicate divine ;
 Good of a high condition ; and to be,
 Proves mine existence drawn with all from God.

FESTUS. How is't that mind create of freedom boasts,
 Which, when most one with God, most knows itself
 Constrained by law divine ? Wert free at first ?
 Or won't by force of sin, free solitude ?
 If thus, then is not freedom a defect ?

LUCIFER. Thou soon shalt see of freedom and constraint
 Enough to sate all questionings.

FESTUS. It is well.

This endless, light-like journey hath wearied me.

LUCIFER. Rest thou. I watch by thee. I am not wearied.
 He sleeps ; he dreams. How far men see in dreams !
 Or dream they see ; do worlds of things ; the heart
 To its first hours of innocence reverts,
 And nakedness and paradise, ere yet
 Round it the world had wound its perishing garb ;
 While yet its God came down and spake with it.
 Such, and so great are dreams. My might, my being,
 To him is but a dream's. And could a state
 To come fill up their dream-stretched minds, they might
 Be gods. And may it not be so ? Then man
 Is worth my ruining. What doth he dream ?
 With all the sway his spirit now exerts
 O'er time, space, thought, it is but a shadowy sway ;
 Light as a mountain shadow on a lake.
 Mine is the mountain's self. A touch would shake
 To nought whatever his soul now feels or acts ;
 But not a world-quake could touch aught of mine :

Thus much we differ. I will not envy man.
 Power alone makes being bearable.
 And yet this dream-power is mind-power—real:
 All things are real : fiction cannot be.
 A thought is real as the world—a dream
 True as all God doth know—with whom all is true.
 The deep dense sleep of half-dead exhaustedness !
 Would I could feel it. Ah ! he wakes at last.

FESTUS. Oh ! I have dreamed a dream so beautiful !
 Methought I lay as it were here ! and lo !
 A spirit came and gave me wings of light,
 Which thrice I waved delighted. Up we flew
 Sheer through the shining air, far past the sun's
 Broad blazing disk,—past where the great great snake
 Binds in his bright coil half the host of heaven ;
 Past that great sickle saved for one day's work,
 When he who sowed shall reap creation's field ;—
 Past those bright diademed orbs which show to man
 His crown to come ;—up through the starry strings
 Of that high harp close by the feet of God,
 Which he, methought, took up and struck, till heaven,
 In love's immortal madness, rang and reeled ;
 The stars fell on their faces ; and, far off,
 The wild world halted—shook his burning mane—
 Then, like a fresh-blown trumpet blast, went on,
 Or like a god gone mad. On, on we flew,
 I and the spirit, far beyond all things
 Of measure, motion, time and aught create :
 Where the stars stood on the edge of the first nothing,
 And looked each other in the face and fled,—
 Past even the last long starless void, to God ;
 Whom straight I heard, methought, commanding thus :
 Immortal ! I am God. Hie back to earth,
 And say to all, that God doth say—love God !

LUCIFER. God visits men adreaming : I, awake.

FESTUS. And my dream changed to one of general doom.
 Wilt hear it ?

LUCIFER. Ay, say on ! It is but a dream.

FESTUS. God made all mind and motion cease ; and lo !
 The whole was death and peace. An endless time
 Obtained, in which the power of all made failed.
 God bade the worlds to judgment, and they came—
 Pale, trembling, corpse-like. To the souls therein
 Then spake the Maker : deathless spirits, rise !
 And straight they thronged around the throne. His arm
 The Almighty then uplift, and smote the worlds
 Once, and they fell in fragments like to spray,
 And vanished in their native void. He shook
 The stars from heaven like raindrops from a bough ;
 Like tears they poured adown creation's face.
 Spirit and space were all things. Matter, death,
 And time, left nought, not even a wake to tell,

Where once their track o'er being. 'Neath the force
 Eternal of his will, they faltered, failed,
 And fainted into nothingness. God's own light,
 Undarkened and unhindered by a sun,
 Glowed forth alone in glory. And through all
 A clear and tremulous sense of God prevailed,
 Like to the blush of love upon the cheek,
 Or the full feeling lightening through the eye,
 Or the quick music in the chords of harps.
 God judged all creatures unto bliss or woe,
 According to their deeds, and faith, and his
 Own will : and straight the saved upraised a voice
 Which seemed to emulate eternity
 In its triumphant overblessedness.
 The lost leaped up and cursed God to his face ;
 A curse might make the sun turn cold to hear ;
 And thee, in all thy burning glory, tremble,
 In front of all thy angels, like a chord.
 Rage writhed each brow into a changeless scowl.
 Madly they mocked at God, and dared his eye,
 Safe in their curse of deathlessness. To hell
 They hied like storms ; and, cursing all things, each
 Soul wrapped him in his shroud of fire for aye,
 With one long loud howl which seemed to deafen heaven ;—
 And then I woke.

LUCIFER. A wild fantastic dream !
 A mere mirage of mind ! Come, let us leave :
 We have seen enough of this world.

FESTUS. Lift me up, then.
 World upon world how they come rolling on !
 Smooth moving, irresistible, breathing life,
 Self perfect each in impulse, course and end.
 But none I see so beauteous as earth.

LUCIFER. Behold these spheres. These be heaven's golden harps,
 By God strung, struck by angels ; making now
 Harmonious worlds, now worlds of harmony.

FESTUS. Here, all where, God is ; the universal soul,
 All centering, circumscribing, quickening all,
 In his own essence infinite ; soul of space ;
 Life of all force, and primary moving will
 Of the great whole his rational laws traverse ;
 Concurrent still to ends foreset, foreproved.
 As in a boundless armillary of God. And here,
 In face of all these regnant rules and bonds,
 Weaving their spells around me, like the rays
 Varied of orbs which leap the vast inane,
 And through one thrill, as those electric beams,
 All hued, in high and turreted chamber born,
 That span with one weird spring, eve's darkening air
 Still reticent of its stars ; mind's spatial fields
 Like glancewise reaped, let wariest soul confess,
 Pondering these mighty spheres imbed on laws

Moral and natural, clashing not, distinct,
 Quick each with life intense as limitless,
 Free reason arguing bent toward special ends
 Heaven can approve, that these, by man adopt,
 And with God's attributes aligned, in us
 Begets that sense of world life which pervades
 The interminous whole; and features traced by truth
 Between man's spherelet spiritual, of soul,
 And the great orb that in God's bosom burns,
 A common conscience of one right, and good,
 Earthly and heavenly hallows, and one truth.
 One moral world life generate which pervades
 This seminary of soul; and bids all feel,
 And joyed participate the effect supreme
 And venerable of one well-ordered plan
 Conceived from the beginning; know in truth,
 Where law is, there is God; yet is not God
 Law only; but peace and order and harmony,
 Progressive purity and perfection; law,
 Proof of self-limiting will, itself to expound
 Towards mind create, whereby his spirit, defined,
 Might interact with secondaries; nor these,
 From contact with pure deity, fail for aye,
 Or in the original void cease. Contract this
 All natural life intelligently enjoys,
 And builds on, for its world complete course.

LUCIFER. All true laws harmonize; in force and end;
 Law being law to God, not less than man,
 Inviolable. Earth crumbles and decays:
 And with the all-gulphing main wars ever; fire,
 Air, each o'er other elements reigns, subdues
 Disorganizes, transforms; the life meanwhile
 Of governing nature being to straightly hold,
 Or rectify that balance, each in turn
 Aims severally to ruin.

FESTUS. Earth, O earth!
 There is so much to love that is purely earth.
 Now I could wander all day in the wood,
 Where nature, like a sibyl, writes the fate
 Of all that live on her red forest leaves:
 Aimless, save there to wander, and mine arms
 Wind round their grey gaunt trunks; nor, idly quite
 Their instincts blind but beauteous seek to guess;
 And what things vegetal think of the light, the air
 The frost disanimative, the nourishing brook,
 And the rude robber storm, that steals their bloom,
 Whiles; and whiles, sinking, moans o'er wintry earth,
 Like a giant over some dead captive dame
 Whom death had saved from madness and his love;
 Could watch the clouds self shaping fanciful,
 Embodied silences, their news yet impart
 To each other impulsive, as from wind or sun;

Could tramp across the brown and springy moor,
 And over the purple ling and never tire ;
 Could look upon the ripple of a river,
 Or on a tree's long shadow down a hill
 For a summer's day, wishing the sun would call
 My conscious soul up, up to him as he draws
 Dew from the earth : sweet earth, in every clime
 Like lovely, in all times, all seasons, now
 In tropic wilds, flower blazoned ; now where hills
 Their burning feet cool in the pearl-paved wave ;
 Now, where in face of winter,—as a flower,
 Sheds its superfluous leaflets to its feet,
 Heart-touched by frost ; or as some silly maid
 Consulting to her cost, thin-bearded hag,
 Enchantress deemed, with many an uncouth rite
 And mercenary, her white weeds, piece by piece,
 Yields, ere yet, mute, to lonely couch consigned,
 And dream of spouse to be, who though far off
 Perchance at sea, still, forced by witchwrought charm,
 Shall surely his features visionary reveal
 Ere dawn ;—delusive spell ! so there, like nude,
 Stands nature, icily pure ; and now where air
 Aids life by temperate sweets, with heat nor cold
 Stifling perfection : these things, in my mind,
 Nor suns nor systems can drive out nor quell ;
 Nor universal system of all suns.

LUCIFER. Oh ! earth and sun I have marked them both of late ;
 This ailing, failing that, whose genial loves
 Men once so mouthed ; they loathe each other's face,
 By this time, trust me candidly, as each,
 Seized of the secret of the other's life,
 Though severally disposed, together clamped
 By fate unloosenably, vain triumph steals
 Of mutual hate. As some black-blooded chief,
 Swift towards his sudden and unexpected end
 Sickening, puts on in right of royalty
 Strange robes of ceremony, to meet with Death ;
 Death, than he mightier ; and to blind all nigh
 Bids, openly, all his treasures be earthed with him ;
 Bar-gold and spoils unransomable of war ;
 Privily, the poisonous bond-quean,—round his feet
 Ministrant, gliding like a sable ghost,
 Whose slow still step he, easeless, eyes, askance,
 Knowing full well she burns at heart to see
 The last of him ;—dooms to be hurled into his grave,
 Living ; and wept by all round, dies content,
 In mute malignance ; ignorant she o' the end,
 So nigh, precipitate. Let them perish, both.
 Behold the boundless prospect. Goodlier view
 I know not : suns which rounding the infinite,
 But slowly, as though reluctant to exhaust
 The pleasing amplitude of space, themselves

Confess but disguised planets, and so complying
With life's perpetual progress, nearer aye
In its vast spiral to the all-central soul,
Towards this the original seat of things return
Obedient; for all worlds are 'ware of God;
Nay, an orb by him arraigned, starts sensitive
To the touch divine, and feels his finger's force;
In counsel or command; the same, it knows
Which holloweth out the bed the stream of time
Shall flow in, flow for aye. Shall mind do less?

FESTUS. Dost ravage all these worlds?

LUCIFER. Ay all mine own.
Where spirit is, there evil; and the world
Is full of me, as ocean is of brine.

FESTUS. God is all perfect; man imperfect. Thou?

LUCIFER. I am the imperfection of the whole;
The great negation of the universe:
The pitch profoundest of the fallible:
Myself the all of evil which exists;
The ocean heaped into a single surge.

FESTUS. O God! why wouldst thou make the universe?

LUCIFER. Child! quench yon suns; strip death of its decay;
Men of their follies; hell of all its woe.
These if thou didst, thou couldst not banish me.
I am the shadow whole creation casts
From God's own light. But lo! we are here; at hell.
Hark to the thunderous roaring of its fires!
Yet ere we further pass, pause; dost thou shrink?

FESTUS. At nought; not I. Come on, fiend! follow me.

XXXV.

Traversed the void,
 Hell's fires, unhallowed not, nor if towards the end
 Of spirit penitence lit, God's patient love,
 Man's penitent soul each other win; nor, reached,
 Found hopeless; but the initials even of good
 In the mad mock of mortal revelry mark; the quelling truth
 That all life's sinful follies run to hell;
 Lies, wrongs, debauches, murders, die not; live
 In hell for ever; make, are hell: till just
 Amendment expiate, and the soul's right will,
 Set heavenward, lead those lost to happier end.
 Perdition to the impenitent certain; yet,
 Redemption as creation vast; all soul
 Of every kind, angelical or humane,
 Amenable sometimes to God's saving truth,
 And mercifullest forbearance, more than force
 Convictive; by long suffering conquering all.
 There, awed, the visitant spirit, in joy endowed
 With heaven's self justifying message,—less
 Man's soul to free from dread of pain eterne,
 Than God's name from the injustice measureless
 They to his rule, corrective, just, impute
 Falsely who such affirm,—hell's end foretells.

Hell. LUCIFER and FESTUS entering.

LUCIFER. Behold my world. Man's science counts it not
 Upon the brightest sky. He never knows
 How near it comes to him, but swathed in clouds
 As though in plumed and palléd state, it steals
 Hearselike and thieflike, round the universe;
 Outcast of order, exile of all law,
 Save that which empties or condemns it;
 Rolling, returning not; robbing all worlds,
 Of many an angel soul; its light hid deep
 In its breast which burns with woe concentrate, woe
 Superfluent, woe self generate and eterne.
 Nor sun nor moon illumine it; and to those
 Who dwell in it, not live. the starry skies
 Have told no time since first they entered there.
 Worlds have been built and to their central base
 Ruined, nay razed to the last atom; they
 Of neither know nor reck, unconscious save
 To agony, nought knowing even of God,
 But his omnipotence so to execute
 Torture on those he hath in wrath endowed
 With heaven's own immortality, as to make
 Them feel what scathe the Almighty can inflict,
 And the all feeble endure, nor—as they would—
 Be annihilated. Be sure that this is hell.
 The blood which hath embrued earth's breast since first
 Men met in war may hope to be reformed, yet,

And reascend, each individual drop,
 Its vein ; the foam-bubble from sea, sun-drawn
 Cloudwards, to scale the fall it erst fell down ;
 Or seek its primal source in earth's hot heart ;
 But for the lost to rise towards heaven, regain,
 Or hope it, ne'er can be.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Deceiver still !
 Wouldst thou mislead, even here ? Who are the lost
 For ever ? Mortal, thou shalt here learn truth.
 Here, see what time by time full oft reveals,
 The immortal fallen for long while unredeemed,
 Impenitent, with no sense of hating sin,
 Yet gradually, or suddenly, self taught
 To know the all-righteous Judge.

LUCIFER. Art thou too here ?

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Here am I, as elsewhere.

FESTUS.

Protect ; instruct

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Behold me, by heaven missioned, so to clear
 From all illusion spiritual and wrong
 Conceit, that tyrant sin as now would teach,
 Or ignorantly misrule, that thou mayst both,
 While in soul agonized by that thou seek'st
 As just reward for wilful wrong, than thine
 Worse only by the unfrustrate act of dread
 Betrayal, now too self condemned, take good
 To thyself ; and so instructed here, the world
 After, forewarn, as hopeless not ; and God
 Prove therefore just in this his judgment hall
 Of hell.

LUCIFER. Believe me in mine own domain.

FESTUS. Are all these angels then, or men, or both ?
 Or mortals of all worlds ?

LUCIFER. Immortals all.

FESTUS. Countless as meteorites that strew the breast
 Of some quenched orb where yet they lie aglow,
 Panting away their life-fires !

LUCIFER. Fallen through sin,
 At various periods of eternity, all,
 And not by one offence to one same doom,
 And at one moment did they down from heaven,
 Like to the rapid droppings of a shower ;
 No ; each distinct as thunderpeals they fell.
 Save those that fell with me. With me began
 Sin even in heaven, with me but sin remains.
 Once I alone was hell. Behold my fruits.

FESTUS. What do yon fiends ? Some 'mong them look like
 mortals
 Whose hearts shine through their frames as living coals
 Through ashes. These, a torture agonised
 Express ; those madness gone delirious ; all
 By excess of evil and woe, in clinging strife
 Contort, like nested snakes, that fang each other

With wounds that wake to life, and struggling deaths
Ceaseless, requickened as if from mortal pangs.
Oh horror ! let me hence.

LUCIFER.

Nay, hear.

FESTUS.

I hear

A strain incongruous as a merry dirge,
Or sacramental bacchanal. Oh shame !

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Truly, for here is spiritual chaos ; deeps
Wherein, distraught to their own first rudiments,
Souls must reseek their ends, refound themselves ;
Each worsening other, deepening life's despair ;
Till sin be from the spirit eliminate clean.

FESTUS. O sad and pitiable ye souls of men,
Self-torturing without end ; hell's alien fiends.

LUCIFER. Men are they not, but devils at their best.
And I would have thee mark them.

FESTUS.

I attend.

LUCIFER. Behold the cup of demons and their board ;
Their fellowship, their triumph, their self hate,
Who so much loved themselves, their wretched joy.

FIEND. Heap high the fires of hell ; let woe not languish,
Heap up with everlasting flames, heap higher.
There, let the man-fiend, consummate in anguish,
Howl through the fathomless profound of fire.
To tempt and ruin those that once were solely
God's, and torment them, when with us they dwell,
This is our end, and their existence wholly
Hid in the doom no demon dares to tell,
But is shadowed in the harrowing eternity of hell.

Deeper than the bowl the drunkard drained so gladly ;
Deadlier than the lie which scorched the liar's tongue ;
Keener than the blade the murderer plied so madly,
Eats aye into the essence, the worm that all hath stung ;
And for that they succumbed to the toils wherewith we bound them,
Their bread is burning brimstone, their drink is bubbling fire ;
For they live upon the nature of the tortures that surround them ;
And their life is in the death they shall never see expire,
Lo ! it floweth from the fountains of the ever-seething ire.

FESTUS. Nay, let me quit. Now know I what hell is.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Be not deceived even here, by the show of
things.

Lift up this veil of fire and look beneath.
Here is nought seen save justice, strict, supreme,
By all approvable ; by the spirit which bears,
Inflicts, or views, remedial, fruiting good ;
Unworthy not of God to doom, nor man
To endure. See 'midst this basement of all soul,
Antipodal to heaven, hate, envy, base
Desire, revenge, wrath, inhumanity, pride,
All crime engendering vice, by sense of sin,
Here forced inevitably upon the spirit,
Patience, and slow conviction of God's truth
And justice, gradually but surely change

To qualities substitute, that time by time
 Mature, and fit the soul to seek a sphere
 More congruous with its altered state ; in fine
 Passing to virtue's realm, and joy's. For know,
 Evil is not an ultimate, even in hell,
 Either as law of being, or state ; but here
 Elsewhere, allwhere, through Being's avoidless shade,
 Probational, and convertible by our God
 To luminous good, restorative of life.
 See, now, how seeks this soul, in true remorse
 Gradual, but unrelaxed, to amend ; and there,
 As when some mountain rivulet through black gorge
 And jagged chasm, hurried, with thunderous plunge
 Leaps suicidal, down ; its bed,—thenceforth
 Of agony, with the death-foam of its lips
 Whitening, and rage regretful at its fall ;—
 Ere yet it reach some pool profound and still,
 Where time, its visage smoothed, may cause reflect ;
 So here, the atrocious spirit, self cursed with sin,
 Writhes in his lengthening torments, till more calm
 Conviction penitence teach, and bring to soul,
 Of future ends considerate, peace.

FESTUS.

O heaven !

Can such things come to pass ?

GUARDIAN ANGEL. They may, and do.

FESTUS. What means yon fiendish chant, then ?

LUCIFER.

It means this :—

Sin with deep draughts of fiery venom fed,
 Drains, to the latest dreg of murderous flame,
 Its own consuming fate, self punitive ; thus
 Constructing its own death, its own defeat
 Scheming with fatal skill, as I myself
 The lord of evil, fear I am.

FESTUS.

But if God's

Good will gave all things being, then his hate,—
 What is unholy he detests to death,
 Cannot do less than, were it even the all,
 Annihilate.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. What if evil, left to itself,
 Corrupt itself away ?

LUCIFER.

When ends the world,

I end.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. A glorious hope. But God's intent
 Unsearchable, as his will unbattleable.
 O'errides, o'errules the all, child of his hand.
 Hence, it means, too, when all's done, and at last,
 Time's sun, declining down the eternal skies,
 Leaves his last shining shadow upon the sea,
 And in the boundless abyss entombs his beams ;
 When final evening folds the universe
 Heavily round, then hell shall drain the dread
 Cup of perdition to the last drop.

LUCIFER. Death
Is of all things thou thinkest, most like sleep.
The dead think otherwise. But wherefore thus?
What mean my words to thee?

FESTUS. In sooth I know not.
I am constrained to hear them.

LUCIFER. They mean this;
Words, shapes, like easily are by spirits assumed.

FESTUS. So, then, these palpable torments,—

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Whatsoe'er
Thou seest, see most thou err not. Burning racks
Conscience self-agonized bears, corrective griefs,
Fires of remorse refining, pains soul-wringing,
Whereby the spirit, of evil dispollute,
Conscious, its clarity reattains ; and strained
Through many a mediate check, which fuller sense
Of others' rights and God's prerogative gives,
Steps upwards towards perfection, though still far,
Proofs fiery show of the inward struggles waged
In spirits immortal by rebellious will,
Proud once of self idolatry ; now shame-burned
With hot humiliation 'neath God's eye,
Sightful of all things to their inmost core,
At forfeiture of noblest privileges,
By creature owned, once for the world's worst cheats,
Life's worthlessest impostures bartered ; sin
And her false felony. Contrarious, there
High o'er hell's reek and roar of clashing lies,
Which now obscure, now deafen, now all affright,
By truth's calm utterance gradually subdued,
Like foul things perishing simply of the light,
See virtue, wisdom, love, peace, righteousness,
Harmonious with themselves and her, up soar
Towards their all-central source, as satellites
Their light, their beauty, to renew ; and showing
How pitiable the counterfeits men praised,
Make to the obdurate infidel helix of shame ;
To betterward tending soul, an aim right high
To aspire to : and a standard of rise gained.

FESTUS. That these poor souls, so self-distort, should e'er
By justice straightened, hope to again see God !

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Not unreturnless are the paths of hell,
More than inevitable : whence now the soul,
Sifted through outraged conscience' scapeless bars
Given up to retribution just, weighed, proved,
May issue purified, and through cleansing rounds
Of nature, self-wise chastened, happiest life
Win ; and the heart's ill lusts exorcised, seek
Sin-freed, and humble, acceptance of its God.
End only worthy, this, of God ; who,—all
Things apliest planned,—to finite reason gave
Virtue, as test of heavenliness, and hell

Reserved as his displeasure souls must feel,
 Who, erring wilfully, impenitent end
 Their day on earth ; his laws world-wise who scorn,
 His provident control, his just commands,
 They answerable, and his retributive rule.

FESTUS. How changed in this heaven-justifying truth,
 Show all things now ! no sin of man, by man
 Not duly expiable ; all life to come,
 And passed, like witness of his righteousness.
 Hell terminable makes heaven an actual joy.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Behold these nations of iniquitous soul,
 Which, mixed with misery here, all orderless lie ;
 Who God forgot on earth, or wronged ; false priests
 Whose lips the prayers they made for peace, defiled ;
 Blessing ambition's bloody-bannered war ;
 The apostate hypocrites of every faith ;
 Death-ravaging demagogues worshippers of the axe ;
 Murderous inquisitors of contending creeds ;
 Remorseless mobs who urged to death the pure,
 The patriot, benefactor of his race ;
 Peoples, not less than tyrannous kings unjust,
 See called on here to pay their righteous dues ;
 Nor less than soul of craftiest statesman, proud
 Erst of iniquitous war for trivial end,
 Heroes whose spirits adhere to forceful fight,
 Still as a sword blood-rusted cleaves to its sheath ;
 Blasphemers ; perjurers ; stirrers up of strife ;
 Impure, the innocent ravishing with their eyes ;
 Torturers of humbler lives, idolaters ;
 Of sinners chief the impenitent, and those
 Who in life were most severe on others' sins ;
 Ignoble souls, who quench in sensual ends
 Reason's divine light, given as guide. Nor these,
 Doomed justly, deem, through purgatorial pains,
 Their way to upper spheres, pure and serene,
 May lightlier win. Who have long time outraged man,
 Have God to appease at last ; and his great heart
 Long suffering, oh unwearable, aye beats
 For justice, mercy crowned. So then let once
 Repentance, reason's first defective step
 From sin's dark ways, ascendant, mark the soul's
 Path, and the atonement's virtually achieved.
 The essential fires they burn in, patient fires
 Which leprous soul unscurf from sin, contract
 Grossly and wilfully, eat in time the curse
 Would else consume them, and to childlike state
 Of innocence, not ineligible, restore.
 Here, all the guilty passions cleansed from self's
 False pleadings, and the indulgence of the sense,
 Show monstrous, shame judicial reason's eye.
 Remorse, repentance, follows ; all things thus
 Work, worldlike round to their due end ; and hell's orb

Hath its proper place in heaven as thine, and all.
 For that earth-life not sufficeth to God's ends,
 And man's immortal destinies, hell, here
 As timely chastisement affirms, yon heaven,
 As prize eternal ; that a mildened doom,
 A doubled bliss this ; and, equivalent deemed
 Of earth's iniquities and her virtues, shows
 O infinite universe, thou hast no like to man,
 The conscious breath of the world's deity,
 No second favourite of our God's. Not hell,
 Not sin, destroys the soul. Can falsest creed
 The innocence unmake of sinless babe ?
 Can lewd idolaters who adore the world,
 Gold, or as savages, the stars and heaven,
 And elements of earth, obstruct, defraud
 God of his worship true ? None worship him,
 But with, and in, his spirit ; nought attains
 His love, but that proceedeth from it first.
 His praise is ever vastening in all worlds,
 Through all the ages. Nought eternal is
 But that's of God ; all pain and woe, finite
 Are, therefore. Can thief steal from heaven the soul ?
 Can liar make God to lie ? Can poisoner drug
 Soul's immortality ? Great the sin, flesh-born,
 But expiable by this, by that forgiven,
 It may be, shall the dead slay e'er the living ?
 Shall God, all love, here, ages afterwards,
 Reserving these misdeeds, himself, reverse ?
 And because man a moment sinned, all crime
 Crown in unending scourgings for the wrong ?
 Shall such be justice called ? 'Twere more than vengeance,
 Said One, five hundred times, forgive ! Shall God
 Act by less perfect law than he bids men heed ?
 Yet such the deity men will fable ; such
 The hell whereto they doom themselves.

FESTUS.

No more !

Not I will so misjudge life's gracious lord.
 As in earth's skies, whate'er the mutable day
 Of rosy or lurid hue brings, high o'er all,
 Beams at last heaven's eternal azure, firm
 Unfathomable ; so here and allwhere, see,
 Rule wrath or justice whiles they may, the whole
 In his ever-enduring mercy wrapped.

GUARDIAN ANGEL.

How else

Could earth's and heaven's Creator glory find
 In hell, or creature good ; if God be just,
 Or man, a being salvable ?

FESTUS.

See, now,

Yon spirit whose brow seems calmer than the wont
 Of most, as though suffused with trustful hope.
 What doth he here ?

GUARDIAN ANGEL. If spirit, it grieve thee not,

And thou mayst speak, alleviate for the time
 From woe, say why here; and when hope, for hope,
 I judge, is thine, may lead thee hence, that so
 This man by God permit, may on return
 Earthwards, to his relate thy tale of truth.

FESTUS. It will much content me. Say what brought thee
 hither?

SPIRIT. God's angel was I once ages ago:
 But though doing good, not glorifying God,
 Who me empowered, He sent me here to fire
 The proud spot from my heart.

FESTUS. And when wilt thou
 Do this, and own thou hast wronged God?

SPIRIT. Even now,
 I do repent me and confess it here.

I do not beseech God now to let me be
 What once I was; but might I only sit,
 A footstool for some other worthier far
 Who owneth now my throne, I should be happy;
 Happier than ever I was in my proud prayers
 That God would give me worlds on worlds to govern;
 Happier than in receiving prayers and blessings
 From prostrate priests of old and crowded fanes.
 O God, remember me, oh save me!

FESTUS. See!
 I do believe there is an angel coming
 This way, from heaven.

SPIRIT. He comes, to me, to me.
 ANGEL. Hail sufferer; sinner now no more. God bids me
 Bring thee on high. Thy throne is kept for thee;
 And all the hosts of heaven are on the wing,
 To welcome thee again.

SPIRIT. I dare not come.
 I am not worthy heaven.

ANGEL. But God will make thee
 Unworthy not, humility self restored.

FESTUS. Spirit adieu! may we meet again in place
 Better, and happier time.

SPIRIT. Glory to God.
 Mortal, I go. Farewell. Say thou to all
 On earth, repent; be humble, and despair not.

LUCIFER. Here, one may go, and there, one. Thousands come
 I have seen, and have contemned, such sparse effects
 Of individual moment, and still spurn
 Such promptings, or in others, or myself.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Hell is God's wrath, his infinite hate of sin;
 Hate, which e'er burns, annihilative of ill.
 And while existent, him so grieves who feels
 All where, compassionately, with suffering good,
 Creation in him working so much grief
 In time, that obstinate if in evil, now
 And again, a world's demeanour may be such

That, to destroy shall please him ; and its name,
 Struck from the starry scroll, no more is heard.
 Know, every proof of virtuous progress towards
 Perfection, towards his own pure mind and ends,
 He loves, aids, seals. Nor be not this forgot ;
 When human nature is most perfect, then
 Its fall is nearest, as of ripest fruit.
 But know it is not sin only God abhors ;
 He all things hates that make it possible ;
 All imperfection voluntary, while choice
 Of better lies at hand : as from him leading,
 Selfwards, astray. Nor start at all, here seen.
 The infinite opposition of perfection
 To imperfection leaves nor choice, nor mean,
 But gracing with all possible good whate'er
 Is capable to receive. The natural whole
 He made, and called, complete. The moral world
 Is never ending. Such God's hate, and love :
 Each holy, just, perfective, this of hate
 As here thou seest ; of love, as shrined in Heaven.

LUCIFER. Thinkst thou as mortals think yet ?

FESTUS.

as hell had no more to say. This is not
 As thou didst speak of hell, nor as I judged.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Judge as thou seest. These hells, eternal
 named,

In speech oracular, word ambiguous used
 If of duration, not to torments point
 Of the individual spirit, which, taught of God,
 Whose universal aim is to redeem
 All He hath made, and made in essence free,
 As of Himself outbreathed, so soon as grieved
 By sense of severance from His mightier will
 So long, and therefore goodward tending, learns
 Its mountain of demerit grain by grain
 To wash away by penitent tears. But look !
 Who hither comes ?

LUCIFER. It is Beniël, Son of God.
 The all-present Deity, made conceivable here,
 In the divine humanity of his Being,
 Urged pitifully to seek his creatures' good
 Their good, his joy : He, all where, operant
 As choice, or need, on their behalf asks.

BENIËL. Friend,
 Not I am God : but sent to express his law
 Of equitablest salvation, to all free.
 Who are free to sin, free are to abandon sin.
 I, fellow immortal with thyself, of Heaven,
 Right willing minister of God, to thee
 And all hell's hosts, accredited, come to teach
 Conciliant penitence, and the fruitless strife
 Waged 'gainst the rational good Heaven proffers still,
 And ever, to the intelligent world of life.

God's mercy is His justice to made soul
 Angelic, human.

LUCIFER. See, great Angel ! see,
 Nor gracious less than great, how yet in vain
 Thou plead'st thy pleasing plan ; for save betimes
 A solitary escheat, of all his tribe
 Falls to the whilome Lord, against whose throne
 World vast, all these thou look'st on, strengthless, here,
 Impenitent, hopeless, Godless, as they, now,
 Their desperate plight for all time worsening, deem,
 In tide and flood of war insurgent, rose ;
 Rose, and for ever ebb'd ; ay, hotlier ebb'd
 Than first they flow'd, in flood, from out the abyss
 Firiest of woe, unamiable, all these,
 Unbent, unbettered, will again rush forth
 In might of mad despair, their hate to prove
 Of God's love, and of thee, who in his throne's
 Broad shadow favoured sit'st, immediate. Know
 Salvation is the scorn of angels fallen.

BENIEL. I know it, with all Heaven. And were soul's death,
 And wrack of spirit life, God's aim and end,
 Such scorn were proof enough, to Heaven's dismay,
 Of the Omnipotent's failure ; in wise work
 Worse worsted He than meanest mind create,
 In structure of some fractious, seeming toy.
 Not possible this, divine Humanity
 Shall rescue yet from ultimate ruin all
 The humane Divinity made. The Father makes
 And orders every moment what is best.

FESTUS. This is God's truth. Hell feels a moment cool.

BENIEL. Hell is his justice : heaven is his love ;
 Earth his long-suffering ; all yon spheres his care
 Of soul perfectible ; nought create but shows
 Some quality of God. Therefore come I,
 By Him sent, these to announce, thus tempered ; peace
 To accord to strife ; to give to justice mercy ;
 Even to long suffering longer : everywhere
 God's justice yields to his Humanity place.
 He hath made that lord of all things, of all worlds,
 And of all souls therein ; yea, world by world,
 And soul by soul, He hath all redeemed, or given
 The means of their salvation. Why not hell ?

FESTUS. To know that every spirit, though long while lost
 'Midst its own maze of error, self designed,
 Still owns a clue, makes tolerable these pains.
 Hope to one world, one soul, is hope to all.

BENIEL. To every spirit that God hath deathless made
 He hath given enough of virtue, truth to know ;
 And lost, thrust, cast away, by that alone
 Recovered, every spirit's to be redeemed.
 While this one, may be, trusting its own strength,
 And failing, God reviles ; and that one, good

Deeming too humble in its course ; by pride
 Pointed to loftier paths, which, trode, converge
 In selfish ends, and enmity 'gainst the soul
 Supreme, divine ; others, in countless modes,
 But each 'like wrong, all, by reverse process,
 May learn what 'tis to be by Him redeemed
 Who from the first foreseeing how far 'stray
 Created mind would err, the great Return
 Planned in His heart ; and thus redemption made
 Like possible to the creature, as to Him
 Was possible creation ; to him sole ;
 Creator, Saviour, Judge. Best, worst, need one
 And same salvation. Final in his world
 Nought is, save God. Therefore these souls to be seen
 And pitied much for their woes, for their evil more,
 Need not, shall not, cannot be inhelled for aye.
 For albeit on earth or here, they have thrust God from them,
 Disowned his prophets, mocked his angels, stormed
 His curses, threatenings, back to Him, God is such,
 He can still pity ; bear with, suffer still ;
 Still save them. Heavenly father ! mercy fears not,
 But, by thy love, hell can be saved from hell.

FESTUS. O holy messenger of Heaven, forebidden
 Me here to meet and 'monish, and to men
 And angels both, thrice blessed interpreter,
 Of the Supreme One's will, say, who be these ?

BENIEL. Mortal, here see who fell of old, through pride.
 Created mind could ne'er the thought conceive
 Of equalness with God, unless by first
 Debasing the idea. They err who feign
 The Fiend by vain ambition fell from Heaven.
 He in the God-state first with all his hosts
 By reason inhered ; by choice, as cloud to cloud
 On the hill-side succeeds, with all his hosts,
 They darkened and declined and passed away.
 Through pride in what they were, they fell, and not
 Ambition to be highest. These while yet
 The dew lay of creation's morn ; and now
 Glistens the dew of evening o'er the world.
 Fall primitive this, of soul create first fall,
 World moulding spirits depute, of all, who each
 Vainglorious fell, assumptive of high names
 Pretemporal, and rites due to Deity claimed
 Rites, as theirs, blasphemous, who, pretended gods,
 Earth's several nations ruled of old, but since,
 Ill expiative, have hence, long while transferred
 Their hopes to Hades ; and, so angels tell,
 Desirous to true God their stolen names
 To yield, commenced, as feigned Saturnian times,
 Their long delayed return. There, who the peace
 Envyng of Angel-world, seductive taught
 Base pleasures, idol worship ; from such stains

Of sin not self-assoiled yet, as must be,
 Ere possible their return to heaven ; and here,
 Mixed in one stormy ruin with the rest,
 Once bright Samiaza, Azazel, recreant thrones,
 And virtues, these, of prediluvian lapse ;
 Of giant sons earth-born the kinless sires ;
 Immortal, but who lost by mortal love,
 Their lot in the eternal.

FESTUS. Save them, Lord !

BENIEL. May he ! Salvation is God's will supreme ;
 Cause final of all things. But while to some
 He grants, as proof and earnest of the truth,
 Ere yet fate take the tangled skein of time,
 And weave it into one surpassing web,
 Fit for the glorious garment of our God,
 Bliss precedent o'er all else ; the angels such ;
 Yet he, the Maker, sole omniscient, knows
 The boundless whole of Being, its mediate joys
 And pains, its oscillant process. and its end.
 Here, sin confessed, that God stand cleared in eyes
 Of every creature, and the need how great
 To feel just, sin's reward ; for soul to know,
 In all worlds, that whoso God's law contemns,
 Him God condemns, Hell justifies ; but not
 In His pure sight for ever. When your part
 Of self-amendment, damnatory of sin,
 Ye have yourselves fulfilled, His mercy then
 Will stay the hand of righteous vengeance. Once
 Your wrong confessed, your judgment justly earned,
 God's equity proclaimed, to His just will
 Assentient, peace serene and grace shall calm ;
 Implunged in life's pure well, the fount of truth,
 May many waters cleanse ye and restore.
 I who by God's humanity am sent,
 His mercy, and equity's retributive law,
 Bid ye immortal fallen, rise again ;
 There is a resurrection for the dead,
 And for the second dead ; and though ye died
 Fell, fell again and again died and fell,
 There's life to come for all, a life, a rise
 Perpetual as the spring's life in the year ;
 Ye fruiting consciously, as ill or good.

A FIEND. Angel of God most high ! what wouldst with us ?
 Is ours not hell enough, remorse, strife, hate
 Mutual, of all ? Why double with thy mild eyes ?

BENIEL. Spirit, I come to show thee how remorse
 For God offended, for violated law,
 For iniquity done, may save thee.

FIEND. How save fiends ?

BENIEL. How any save, save by the spirit of truth,
 And love, of Him whose mercy so outdures
 All things, it must at last all things persuade.

Repentant, God forgives thee, and the truth
 Enlightening. He, the all-holy One, shall hallow
 With sense of justly inflicted chastisement,
 And of an equity lenient, more than law,
 Wiser. Repent still : judgment is at hand.
 But these means, times for repentance given, o'erslurred,
 Tremble, this hell is nought to that which comes.
 Believest thou God can save thee ?

FIEND. I believe,
 And I adore.

BENIEL. Faith sanctifies the soul,
 See all ye fallen, even in the heart of woe.
 Come to me, Spirit ; faith hath but touched thy brow
 With momentary finger, and thou art bright
 As morning is in heaven.

SPIRIT. Angel of light am I again. See, this is to be saved.
 Ye lost, confess that Heaven is justified
 In hell's corrective plagues.

LUCIFER. I like it not.

BENIEL. Hear ye immortals, dead in evil and sin,
 Yet unrepented of, oh repent, and be
 All angels.

SPIRIT. Oh, repent. He comes to show
 How penitence yet available all may save.

A LOST SOUL. I too, who while on earth believed not God,
 Nor deathless spirit ; nor, partly by defect
 Of teaching, may be, self-willed, heaven nor hell,
 Nor sin's result ; who faithless, trusted not
 God's universal fatherhood, nor man's
 Immortal sonship ; nor that e'er the all-good,
 Indwelling Heaven, could in humanity
 Hide, and abide essential ; but believed
 In mine own fleshly being only ; I,
 Repentant sore, that vile belief condemn,
 And viler disbelief ; a worthier faith
 Now, blessed angel, glorying in, shall hope
 Me visit here ?

BENIEL. Though in hell's deepest hell,
 Thy soul shall she salute, and God, redeem.
 Arise ; seek Heaven.

SOUL. Blessed herald of Divine
 Mercy, thy sweet command, (as precept preached
 Of old by prophet, in himself he proved
 Of valid truth, in pardoning all his foes)
 Thou betterest by exempling ; bidd'st to Heaven,
 And show'st the way ; thy debtor thus all life.

ANOTHER SOUL. I, too, 'mid scenes of violence, sins of scul,
 Justly cut off, and crimes of head and hand,
 In fullest fruitage of iniquitous act,
 By God all good, my fellow men to save
 From baser wrongs, then plotting in my brain,
 Repent me of my wickedness ; and still

Acknowledging the mercy of these pains
 So grievously imposed, so long endured,
 Dare hope his pardon, who me power hath dealt
 His justice to confess. Thou couldst not be
 True to Divinity, were not sin condemned
 By Him, whose faithfulness from Heaven to earth,
 Reacheth, and hell's hot roots ; nor, pardoned not,
 And sin-atoned for, to humanity true.
 Red-handed in my guilt I died. And death
 Darted upon my soul. Through woeful ages
 My spirit hath burned with expiative remorse
 And longing sore to serve whom I had wronged,
 On earth ; desire that God's compassionateness
 Would grant me leave, for them to sacrifice
 This self I am, this whole essential pang ;
 Nor elsewise seek I not release from woe.

BENIEL. Be of good heart, poor soul. Thou art not lost,
 Assure thyself, for aye. Time puts no term
 To God's divinest attributes ; to love
 Compassion, mercy, truth, or time, and time's
 Events would dominate his, the eternal mind.
 Lo now these human with the angelic mixed
 In process of purgation ; angels these
 Retributive, who by God ordained, their own
 Mis-deeds to expiate in judicial acts,
 Self-punitive, while to others penal, thus
 The united betterment work out of both.
 Mark, too, who 'twixt due penitence and remorse
 Contrition's upper stone and nethermost, grind
 The spirit self-convict, self-condemned, as through
 A mill of fire, to pure repentance ; whence,
 Reframed, revived, the heart again
 Warms with new love towards God and man. Be sure,
 Mortal, through all our God's intelligent world,
 Through all its infinite multitudes of soul,
 Its testing earths, its proof-fraught spheres, its orbs
 Of purifying progress, near or far,
 Central, or clustering round some parent globe,
 Not man alone aspires to Himwards ; not
 Man only worships wholly. Spirits elect,
 Through all mind's conscious orders, fraught with gifts
 Of reason, and answerable for act or choice,
 Made just, made holy, glorified, e'er seek
 With Him essential union. Nay, even here,
 Through all hell's haunts of burning anguish, woe
 Unslaked, for follies 'voidable once, now closed
 With seal judicial of the passed ; regrets
 Unstifeable for secret sins to the world
 Since patent ; for applauded lies life-long ;
 The wail of self-deception undeceived ;
 The gnawing curse of conscience tricked in vain ;
 The torturing memories of life's every grace

Each innocent joy, each natural pleasure fouled,
 Degraded, desecrated by sin ; through all,
 The guilty spirit still purifiable, keeps,
 Deep in its inmost essence, consciousness
 Of divine origin, nor misdoubts its own
 Capacity of redemption. Change may be
 That moment quickening in them, not in vain.
 Though here be weepings of repentant tears
 Enough to quench hell's sin-lit fires ; though here
 Be wailings like the moan of dying worlds
 Over impossible restitutions ; wrongs
 Ne'er to be righted now ; o'er virtue's last
 Resolves for future amendment lost ; not less
 Believe the world's God's field of culture ; sin's
 Tares into ashes burned more fertile making
 Creation ; and his heavenly garner helping
 With time's more precious harvestage to fill.

FESTUS. O holy envoy of Heaven, tell further, how
 Their final doom man fallen and angel lost,
 May lighten or rectify ? Examples these
 Or but exceptions of the state to be ?

BENIEL. All things are intermediate ; in His world
 Nought final is save God ; his name for aye
 Be praised and magnified ; he first alone,
 He only last, Creation circling midst,
 Life preexistent in the spirit-spheres
 Is life preparative ; upon the earth's,
 Probation ; after death purgation. All
 Begins, all ends, all mediates sole in God.
 He all things makes, rules ; all administers.
 It is just that sin should suffer. It is unjust
 Alike to made and Maker to believe
 The Eternal should a creatural soul invest
 With deathlessness, to suffer pain alone ;
 No possible betterment to the sufferer
 Resultant, proof 'twere of pure tyrant rule ;
 Birth but a penalty, and mortal life
 One cruel and continuous curse of God.

LUCIFER. But here annihilation is their hope
 Who be not hopeless. How shall aught create
 The onslaught sustain of him, the Almighty One ?
 Or how, if hell be but his justice, bear
 The wrath of the Omnipotent ? Who despair,
 And, proud to suffer Being, deem nought ends,
 Live on, in untamed energy of ill,
 If matter indestructible, why not mind ?

BENIEL. Yea, who the depths of Deity can conceive,
 That only see its surface, creaturewards ?
 Their punishment is partly to believe
 Hell's pain perpetual ; but it ends.

LUCIFER.

Ends ?

BENIEL.

Ends.

Fires these Æonian, not eternal ; thoughts
 How diverse ! Nought eternal is save God,
 In like sense, and the spirit with him made one,
 As purgatory 'tis everlasting, this ;
 The fires eternal, not the punishment
 On individual soul, or man's, or fiend's :
 Age lasting, or with life like timed alone.
 For just so much as a man hath lived in sin,
 In wilful wickedness or contempt of good ;
 Corrupt, corrupting others ; unrepentant,
 So much for practised wrong the spirit suffers ;
 So much for worst offence he pays soul-racked.
 Who tempts or wrongs another, mulcts himself
 In misery he not reckons nor conceives ;
 So long remorse, as with a burning rasp
 In venom steeped, shall bite his quivering heart ;
 Till, blanched and purified, sin's pantherine spots
 Vanish in whiteness as the wool of lambs.
 While every evil passion which man's soul,
 With flesh engendering, fostered while in life,
 Becomes in death a living fiend to scourge,
 With parricidal and Briarean hand,
 Its guilty parent, shrinking, shrieking, lost ;
 But vanquished, grows an angel, pure, transformed,
 Attracting to salvation in the heavens.
 For the foundations of the intelligent world
 Are laid in imperfection ; and all soul
 The fire divine of rational pain for sin
 Must pass through, in its holy reascent
 Through life perfective to life pure, supreme :
 But 'gainst unending woe, God's pitying love
 Towards every soul, all covering, e'er avails.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Wherefore should all men purge the soul of
 sin

Conscience of criminal desire ; self-love,
 Concupiscence, ire, envy, hatred, sloth,
 The mind of all perturbing passion ; heart
 Of all propensity not made clear to bear
 Heaven's fullest, holiest light ; whereof by love
 Divine and human, wisdom, charity,
 Immortal mediators of the world and soul,
 Man may become the blessed recipient,
 And heaven be filled with jubilant spirit, as air
 With notes prismatic, moving not, to God's
 Creative mind, with concourse orderless,
 Unmeant, but the vivacious seed of worlds.

BENIEL. Oh vainly never from the contrite soul,
 Stabbed with the golden dagger of remorse
 For sin, pours forth the penitential prayer.
 The enlightened conscience quickened by blessed grief
 Man's self condemning judgment torturing him,
 Death were too cheap a pain, man's life a fine

Too trivial to appease God's proud revenge,
 But that with reason faith unites, less ill
 Men do, less will they suffer ; the more good
 On earth men do to men, the more will God
 Do unto them in Heaven ; for He repays
 Always a hundred, oft-times thousandfold.

SPIRIT REDEEMED. Who knoweth this and sinneth, great his sin.

SPIRIT SAVED. But greater towards the sinner is God's love.

BENIEL. One grain of good, whose sheafings shall at last
 Choke out perdition, and with glorious death
 All evil ruin, see mortal ! here insown.

FESTUS. Thou who in guise of angel showest to man,
 And all intelligent mind, the mighty mould
 Of that divine humanity which inheres
 In the Eternal ; and our natural end
 Foreplanned ; thy words are holy, fitting one
 Who, filially adopt, and called, of God,
 Communion holds alike with Deity,
 And with ourselves, his creatures. In our breast
 The weakness of all worlds dwells ; on thy brow,
 Their Maker's glory, and thine own. All life's
 Most holy sympathies, all mind's virtues meet
 Heavenwards preponderating in thee, and last
 Even in God's bosom centre. And thus love,
 The heart's deep gulph-stream, that with warmer wave,
 Sun gilded, soothes the abysses of our life,
 And tempers with its mild divinity,
 The universal breath all part-wise breathe,
 Hastening its end celestial with serene
 Progress to compass, makes us, transient, feel
 In loving God, the soul reseeks its source ;
 Being to being answering, name to name.

LUCIFER. This likes me not. Though what seemed destined once
 For ever, happier fate annuls, yet who
 Hopes fall like mine redeemable ? Away !
 The vain impossible thought.

BENIEL. Impossible not.
 Hell proved remedial, proves God's rational love.
 The world to error sworn misdeems the spirit
 Create, tormented through all times ; but soul
 Finite, can bear not infinite pain ; and hell,
 God's everlasting ordinance ; nought he does
 But is with his own eternity impressed,
 And wise good-will ; hell, reason's spiritual force
 Corrective, force ameliorant of ill
 Done wilfully 'gainst right, truth, conscience, seems
 Fitliest prepared for temporal wrongs ; itself
 Of terminable appliance to finite
 Transgressor, as were just ; and just God is :
 Not punishing minor sins with major pains,
 But penalty appropriating to offence,
 With nicest equity. Greater need, in sooth,

Were that the base, or ignorant, soul should rise
 Through grades of penitence and amendment, sought
 Freely, and wise become and noble ; blessed
 With final pardon of God ; than slave in hell
 Through burning ages endlessly, to adjust
 The balance sin on earth left wronged ; for sin,
 Offspring of evil, and wherefore only He
 His hands makes answerable, yea sin itself
 Irreconcilable to God, shall yet,
 Self mulct of all its aims, ends, life, become
 The contrary of all things, and not be.

LUCIFER. This is to me a mystery. How can hell
 Dwindle, betimes, thus ; God being just ; how sin,
 To limited soul, imperfect made, not e'er
 Impossible, to contingency subject
 Of all kinds through all ages, cease ?

FESTUS. I see
 Truly in this God's wisdom just ; foresee
 A time when creatural opposition void,
 All temporal misconception ended, soul
 Though bounded, so instructed, shall confess
 God's justice and benevolence in all things,
 All spirits then one with truth divine, this hell,
 More state than place, yet place not lacking, more
 Than feeling focus'd in the breast lacks heart,
 Shall in the fiery lake of old ordained,
 Annihilant of all ill, cease ever. Yes !
 Orb of perdition ! thou too shalt die out,
 And thy red-sheeted flames shall fail for aye.
 Thy palpitating piles of ruin, hot
 With ever active agony, and quick
 With soul immortal ; down whose midnight heights
 God's wrath, in cataracts of self-kindling fire,
 Leaps ceaseless, quenchless on hell's orb, shall rush
 Into divine oblivion, as a steed
 Rushes into the battle there to die.
 Thy quivering hills of black and bloodlike hue,
 Death-breathing, shall collapse like lifeless lungs,
 And end in air and ashes. Thou shalt be
 Dashed from creation, sparklike, from a hand
 Scarless ; rolled off, a volumed syllable
 Of midnight thunder, from truth's coming day.
 The river of all life which flows through heaven
 Shall reach yet, yet o'erflood thy flames. No more
 Shalt thou vex angel, God, nor man, with vaunt,
 Or blazon false, of endlessness ; nor all
 Soul-seekings, though of hungriest bigot zeal,
 Mad for eternal ills, shall hunt thee out.
 Thy day is sometime over. Be it soon ;
 And thou the lost world which the world hath lost.

LUCIFER. Where now is he, whose advent, wheresoe'er
 O'er evil triumphing, makes heavenly good

Persistent? Nought I fear, save him, and him Successful.

FESTUS. There; see many do believe.

LUCIFER. It is not that I cannot credit truth.
 But that I rather fear, as one of old,
 God hath inspired false prophets with a lie,
 To wreak me further wretchedness. But now
 Stand thou, while this great reaper reaps his ear,
 Elsewhere, beside me. I will speak to mine;
 Or they will sure adore him. Hell, O hell!
 Powers of perdition, thrones of darkness, hear.
 Wrath, ruin, torment, hear ye me. It is I.
 Thanks, fiends I know ye hate me well, and may.
 I tempted, ruined all. But wherefore now
 So ominously supine? Earth's fate, and all
 Her many kingdomed tribes, now, know ye not,
 Is oscillating in air? List, then, to me.
 Be still, ye thunder-blasts, and moving hills
 Of fire, that sweep, like columned sands, these plains
 Or rush, unthought, in avalanches of flame,
 Down hell's precipitous soul-falls, paved with gleeds
 That force to fly into the fire-breathed clouds,
 And these to fall, alternate dread; be calm.
 Hell doth outdin itself; weak-hearted slaves,
 What are ye that I thus should toil for you?
 Power I have proffered, kingdoms I've prepared,
 Nothing is for ye but your fiery fate.
 Slaves, slaves, ye are too much at ease. Ye leave
 Me single in evil's work of woe. I, sole,
 Go forth to sow destruction. I alone,
 Reap ruin. But had ye been as I, ere now,
 The universe had been, doubt not, all hell;
 And for a pit each fiend had had a world
 To rule. But rise. To strive 'gainst Heaven is life;
 Evil to spread is more than joy; its shade
 Dims all that yet may happen. Up, hell and act;
 Who knows but from its central chair, we good
 May yet dis-seat; and, hurling each his orb
 Scatter it in fine as sand? To reign is nought
 Like to dethrone; each greater than than God.
 Or is it ye dream, like those submiss, late lost,
 Of peace, and pity, of power restorative?
 And if dethrone we may not, that we can,
 We will; withdraw from spirits even, one by one,
 The allegiance owed the Lord of life in heaven
 Or elsewhere; leave him lonely in the skies'
 Desert, and grieving on his liegeless throne;
 While we o'er all the populous spheres hold rule,
 And, spite of right and good, ill deify
 With these or those, new ranks of spirit sublime,
 Succeed we may. nor fail one perfect soul.
 If otherwise us it irks not; for, at last,

Time perfected, if ever, should all souls, freed,
 As promised, from the tomb-like clay they boast
 Rise ; ere the threshold of eternity one
 Crosseth, a deed of note I have in mind,
 May yet be achieved ; whereof more news anon.
 Methinks I see ye captives, suppliants, bound.
 Can His wrath less than us annihilate ?
 May we not so sin as to ensure this end ?
 Choose ye. I have chosen ; and chosen long ago.
 But will ye, fiends, give up your hopes of heaven,
 And entrance as young conquerors, fresh from spoil,
 And choice of thrones, won by your death-red hands,
 For pitiful penitence, like yon angel there,
 Garbed though in sheeny white, star-tiar'd, lyre armed ?
 Forbid it, all sin's pride, sin's prowess ; all
 Hell's pains we have borne, nor blenched, forbid ! Meanwhile,
 Know ye, man's world, adjudged not long to endure,
 And though time's orb so waneth, fields there are
 Twain to be foughten as yet, with man, with God.
 Be glad ; be glad. Earth's sons may soon be here ;
 To our vast forces accessories strong.
 And here, as earnest of my word, behold
 This visitant earthling ; standing by my side.
 Speak to them, Festus.

FESTUS. Nay, I dread them.

LUCIFER. Speak.
 Great spirits, he scarce is worthy to address ye,
 In that I cannot say, he is yet like you,
 Committed to extremest sin ; nor yet
 To pains perpetual doomed.

FESTUS. But I am come ;
 God wills me here ; not even Hell's prince repugns.
 These matters for my presence here sufficeing,
 I, saved or lost, know well enough 'tis fate :
 Fate that I come ; fate that I quit ; and though
 Soul-racked to view such woe, yet mercy approves
 The means remedial of God's righteousness
 And justice satisfied ; for wrath which not
 Ends, nor appeaseable shows, is brute revenge,
 Not divine equity. Souls, doubt I not,
 Are, which be better some, some worse than mine ;
 More illy qualified these than I to brook
 Hell's stripes restorative and chastening storms
 Fiery ; but though none less ; and would there be so !
 Yet have I never mocked God's holy word ;
 Nor torn it into fuel for my scorn ;
 Nor doubted, saving tremblingly, his being ;
 His love to man ; His right to be adored ;
 Never have hated ; never wronged my race ;
 Deluded nor rejoiced in their delusion ;
 Never have beckoned off the good from good ;
 Never have mocked, nor scattered hopes ; nor e'er

Have wasted hearts, nor desolated hearths ;
 And if I have once, twice, as who hath not ?
 Toyed with temptation, yet even he will say,
 Who there stands, I have never yielded up
 To his burning dalliance, this my soul. And though
 Sin were God's everlasting hate, sin's not
 In the spirit of man, not even in yours, eterne ;
 As I from reason, truth revealed in Heaven,
 And out of lips divinely inspired, have learned
 Here ; and now haste, confirmed of love, to impart
 To man. Yet he's my friend, the Evil One.
 And why is wondrous ; judge ye wherefore, too.
 I have no malice, envy, nor revenge ;
 None of those petty passions which bad hearts
 Scourge red into themselves ; for passions are
 Sufferings ; and which to nourish is his wont ;
 Wherein's his power : and, save enjoying earth,
 Have nought done he could share in. But he came
 From God, he said, to give ; and I believed.
 Great spirits lie not, nor doubt.

LUCIFER. Hear ! He says truth.
 Not that he knows, (nor his, nor yours, to know)
 The reason of all my doings. It is that unfear'd,
 Unforethought, tempts, betrays : and that I who bait,
 Who plague the world to do its will, most use,
 Proceed we therefore to the future. True,
 Though tortured with undying pain all we,
 All pain, as born of life create, must end ;
 Nay life, beginningless not, itself must cease.
 Be only hate perpetual of all good.
 And life itself sustained by hope of strife.

A FIEND. Proud are we to prepare for such contest.

A SPIRIT. A field ye may repent of.

LUCIFER. E'en so,
 This, or that, issue tells. To win is gain
 Of purpose ; lose ? We lose what ne'er was ours.
 Repent ? We gain apt tolerance for a time.

A SPIRIT. 'Gainst man thou mayst be worsted even yet ;
 'Gainst God, thou must be.

LUCIFER. Be it. We still can bear.
 And bested, still renown is ours in Heaven.
 But whatsoe'er our schemes, sometime they'll keep.
 Nor need designs unripened more than peer
 Coy from their fence of words. Time's more than need.
 Eternal nought is, nought can be, save God.

FESTUS. But how Creator's glory reconcile
 With all creation's sin, save those His grace
 Sustains perforce in heaven, 'twere wise to leave
 In His hands ; since nor ye, nor I, can say.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Nor yet is the all-create replete with sin.
 Nay, but a minor part. Could God rejoice
 In that He hath made, were all convict of guilt,

In Heaven or earth? Yet hath Heaven more of joy
In one hour than all earth for many an age,
Or groups of starry worlds from birth to death.

LUCIFER. Know, fiends! All I have to this mortal done
Sanctioned of Heaven, which might, an it would, annul
One who submission less than betterment
Hates and rejects, or may to the end design.
For in but one groove can I or act or live.
God! go on making; I will go on marring;
Go on believing, man; I go on tempting;
Saint, angel, cherub, seraph, and archangel,
Good genius, thou, thou guardian soul o' the world;
And, Beniël, thou, of all the sons of God
First favourite of my hate, and hell's whole scorn,
Go ye on all, all blessing. It is my being
To curse and to undo. Be it now for me,
These lords of misadventure to consult;
Then back to earth, to work out what remains
Of this man's fate; and wait his world's destruction.

FESTUS. Prince of aerial powers, whose single chiefs,
(Here, in sin's lowest deeps, malignant, plot
Iniquity worse than hell's walls, though enlarged,
Can e'er confine; and thence o'erleaping, earth's
High summits seized, realms, worlds, command of guile)
More formidable to soul, than hosts colleagued
To some lone fort, man's spirit misguide, or lure
To ruin; and oft by overpoise of ill
Tempt God to o'erthrow earth, and so sad remorse
Wreak in his breast, the unbuilder he of things,
As framer once, by one mere element
Withdrawn from nature's sensible mass, the whole
He might exterminate in a day, one day
Destructive, complemental of the seven;
Much fear I, for man's orb, if these inflamed
By their implacable Head's incitements, rush
To o'erwhelm it with their tempest of ill foes,
Pride, superstition, godlessness, unbelief,
Worse misbelief, idolatry, and like sins.

LUCIFER. Be at ease. Those fiends have never left thine earth
Since first they found a footing. 'Tis their home.
What next may hap, me irks not. And albeit
One needs but seldom councils how to guide
Our feet astray; to counsel!

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Let cabal
These, as they list; their malice heed not thou,
Manwards nor Godwards.

FESTUS. Not the less seems hell
To its centre shook by Beniël's gracious deeds
And words; he, chiefest of the sons of light
Great and resistless made by gifts divine
To him imparted with his mission. Blessed
The most and lowliest he in God's great cause

To serve, by service consecrate to good
 Of all the whole return : whose advent here,
 As elsewhere, triumphing o'er evil, makes
 Good heavenly, all persistent, willed of God.
 How many a lost one shall the boon effect
 Feel of his words, and acts.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Lo ! far and near,
 Are many who half believing, deem their loss
 In his departure remediless ; but Heaven
 Already reached, he herald-wise shall tell,
 If but of intermediate arc, the hope
 That gilds the welkin of Hell's woful world ;
 Where yet, his purpose neither won nor lost,
 Of dubious doom, enlists Heaven's love intense.

FESTUS. Let us too hence ; nor wait, suspense, so long,
 That Evil 'company us.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. He 'll follow fast.

FESTUS. Rise ! The Divan disperses. Even as when
 On earth at close of autumn storms, some eve,
 While ocean's ruddy border marks where low
 On the horizon hid, the spotful sun,
 Assentient fates frowns ; whereon suddenly
 The clouds call council ; and dim vaporous forms,
 Titanic, hundred handed, powers enorme,
 Their light-edged crowns upreared, like kings convoked
 Proud war debate ; or seem ; while light lasts ; soon
 Right tyrannously resolved, one final storm
 Conclusive of all wrongs, all ills, to wreak
 On some poor isle or coast, the first they meet ;
 And so set forth gesticulative of threats
 Their sad complot to achieve ; swift, break they up,
 And start them, muttering, o'er the sky ; so these,
 Swollen with wrath declamatory, who now
 Their lurid legions lead, and livid arms
 'Gainst us, weak earthlings.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. God forefend ! who knows
 But Heaven may curses turn to blessings, hate
 To grateful aid : turn dread reproach, despair,
 And senseless and unjust complaints, to trust
 Of fellow spirits ?

FESTUS. I see him gathering all
 His wings in air about him ; marshalling
 His every force to o'ertake us.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. We shall meet,
 Doubtless ; but not before we make the sun.

XXXVI.

Hence earthward tending first we make the sun ;
 Where as at rest in light, a mediate point,
 A bright effect original of God,
 Enlightening all things inly and without,
 'Twixt earth and heaven, the spirit beloved, first met
 In satellite sphere, and aye progressive, here,
 By kindred throne companioned, seeks, of truth
 Missioned, our soul heroic to imbue
 With sense of being æonian. Only thus,
 As we advance in life perfective, soul
 Sums accurately the future forming force
 Of failures passed ; for failures are all faiths ,
 Though each to educable man once good.
 The spirit inquisitive of the long foregone,
 By natural barriers checked, at last all bounds
 Of birth and death views vanish ; eyes the dawn
 Pretemporal of creation ; eyes the end.
 Which the soul searchful of truth spiritual, hidden
 In light's supreme source, seeks, and learns, and loves.
 Could suffering expiate offence, the soul
 Now suffering had the most may be, atoned,
 But something more than suffering, God requires,
 Ere re-instating soul, to sin self-thralled
 Spontaneously, and which rethronement seeks
 Mid heavenly orders ; more than mere remorse ;
 Mere penitence ; it is love which nears his own.
 Earth-like, the heart must bide all chance, ere yet
 The Heaven-life form within it ; and we feel
 Midst all the world's delights, and life's desires,
 That chastity of heart which loves but God ;
 And self-restriction privilege supreme.

The Sun.

FESTUS, ANGELA, LUCIFER, GUARDIAN ANGEL, OURIEL.

FESTUS. Parent of spheres, who filling once all space,
 God bidding, threwest off as cloaking clouds,
 To thee intolerable, of nebulous heat,
 The planetary fires ; which, gathered there
 In narrowing circlets, imminent o'er the void,
 Each in one common sky, thou centering all,
 Reign'st o'er, their lord and sire ; so hailed by earth
 First of heaven's stars reflective of the light
 And favourite of the sun, sole source and end
 All turn to ; I too like thyself, a liege
 But spiritual, of God, who gave us both
 To be ; but in free obedience me ; in law
 Infrangible thee, the law of light ; through space
 Darting thy quickening ray from orb to orb,
 Leaping, like thought ; behold, I seek thee, Sun !
 Not all unconscious may be of thy state,
 Slave giant, god in bonds ; whose lot sublime
 But 'scapeless 'tis, to king the ætherial world,
 As mine, of doom not wholly weetless ; urged
 Not albeit by divine necessity,
 (Servant of God, and master of all things

Externe to that free mind man owns with Heaven ;)
 Nor contrary to Heaven's fore-ordering will,
 But freely, and mine own arbitrary choice,
 Due knowledge seeking of all being passed,
 Far back in nature's veriest prime ; to prove
 The spirit's original God-gift, liberty ;
 Soul's summit flower, which first by Him conveyed,
 Reunion conquers with its source divine,
 Essential ; in existence yet discrete.
 Home, doubtless, this of vasty spirits who rule
 Like realms, far stretching. One I seem to know,
 Already arrived, and never absent long.

LUCIFER. Lo ! I am one who seeks not to be sought ;
 Nor waits to be expected. Heard I aright ?
 Though I and sundry others have by times
 Adjured him, I have mostly found the sun
 Sparing of speech, and chary in reply.
 Wait'st thou his answer ; or shall I speak for him ?

FESTUS. Some sign oracular, world-wide, shadowy,
 If word none spoken may show not all in vain
 My visit, nor all unfruitful to the soul.
 There's more than one I am named to meet with here,
 Beside mine heavenly guide whom gone to seek
 The angel regent of this orb, I await,
 Confiding in good tidings, nor thee less
 Blessed Angela, of thy sojourn here to tell
 And all thy soul's intensive culture, trained
 Heavenward, hope I to meet.

LUCIFER. Even failing these
 If chance, or choice, or destiny hath caused
 Our courses here converge it were doubtless well.

FESTUS. Would I could welcome one all ill-come !

LUCIFER. Still
 All mysteries once I pledged me thou shouldst ken
 Nor mazed stand at aught. That promise now
 I honour ; and will show thee thou hast been
 Thyself whate'er thou seest. Ere every birth,
 The spirit in self obliviousness implunged,
 Sloughs off the oppressive consciousness of years,
 Soul saddening ; as with thunder seasoned eve
 The record of a day of joy. But leave
 Is sometime mine, and power devolved of Heaven,
 With reminiscence of time's tides foresped
 The memory to endow, and from life gone,
 Evoke eternal pictures ; that all souls,
 Of worlds to come, may view the undying passed
 Made to the mind's eye visible ; for the world
 Of sense is but an outline manifold
 And surface of true substance. Underneath
 That superficial veil is nought save God ;

FESTUS. Draw it, and die !

LUCIFER. Not yet. It stirs not me.

That thou wouldst e'er from this to that extreme,
 Hie with a footstep as of polar light
 All sequence mocking : urgent when the passed
 Then on the future calling. But this sun,
 This mighty orb and all its solar brood,
 How many, or how far soe'er ; all life,
 Hath its set suit and service. Be it now mine
 To show what hath been ; show thine own vast self
 The sum most deep of mystery ; and the soul
 Here doting on the veriest chance of death
 Its prouder pre-existence, angel mate
 Of immortality all time foregone.
 And now what seest thou ?

FESTUS. Surely, in yonder shape
 I see approaching, purer, lovelier, her
 Whose spirit enshrined in beauty's crescent star,
 With bliss intense lit up my heart ; my soul
 Steeped in the pearly radiance of her smile ;
 But here, of loftier and more grand aspect
 Nor now by inward shadows umbered ; speak,
 Transcendent spirit ; and whom thou seekest, say,
 And wherefore here ?

ANGELA. Oh, an' thou mind'st thee not
 Of that I spake, when (in yonder spherelet pale
 Of splendour, which, concentric with all globes
 Rounding this throne of light in pauseless pomp
 Of order rolls,) we last met, I a dream
 Named, to me ominous of all good ; to thee
 Not illy shaped, it now were vain to grieve
 For memory's loss.

FESTUS. Thine image, and thy words
 Lie in my heart's entablature graved too deep
 To lose, but by a shock shall shatter all
 To shards.

ANGELA. Forgive ! Why here ? This know : the joy
 Chiefest but one of spirits concerned to assure
 Their best reward God's smile, is so to seek
 Their good they love, as leads such to like end
 As that their friends and favourers enjoy.
 Such end be thine ; to ever more advance
 Soul-wise toward God. The life of all that's good
 Is one perpetual progress. Every thought
 That strengthens, purifies, exalts a mind
 Betters the soul so blessing.

FESTUS. Spirit benign,
 Such progress is perfection. It is the power
 Of man's perfectibility gives to earth
 Capacity of heaven. And thou hast left
 Yon orb celestial, man's embodied hope
 Of brighter life to come, for this, light's throne ;
 Throne than all empires wider. But while thou
 Art here of right and fitness, I of mere

Permission come, and momentary choice ;
 A stranger wandering, spotlike, round the tent
 Radiant of solar fire-cloud ; worthy scarce
 Such privileges to claim, yet bidden of fate.

ANGELA. To will and to permit, with one whose will
 Creative even of all obstructive force,
 Is irresistible, were nought but one,
 When His own joy and man's good, wherefore the whole
 Was framed and founded, forms the eternal end.

OURIEL. Mortal, and thou his angel guard, and thou
 Blessed spirit, now denizen of these mighty realms ;
 And thou, unblessed ; each on your several quest,
 Appointed or allowed, one aim all ruling,
 Be it mine to bid to all free access here
 In his name who all guides of worlds ordains.

FESTUS. Much it rejoiceth me, O angel guard,
 To meet thee here intuitive.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Wheresoe'er
 Thou art, am I, or far or nigh, to ward
 From woe, to watch 'gainst evil, or to warn.

LUCIFER. Doth evil lurk in visions of the passed,
 Which passed I promised him of old to show ;
 Not knowing then, scarce now, what stores were here
 Historic and phantasmal of life-scenes,
 Spirits most choice, on this or that sphere, live
 Age after age to enact.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Thou promisedst more
 Than all Ill could perform, or thou mightst claim.
 Mortal, wilt choose or him for hierophant,
 Or me ?

LUCIFER. Nay, let the fates, their great designs achieved
 Proceed, to our enlightenment. I yield.

FESTUS. Here 'neath yon mighty ruler, mightiest he,
 Most blessing, who most serves in godliest love,
 Ought not we first his sanctioning aid to ask ?

LUCIFER. Yon servant-lord's ? chained doubtless to his throne ?
 Such empery be not mine, nor aid, nor leave.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Speak, regent spirit of the sun ; dispel
 Our difficulties, and solve our densest doubts.

OURIEL. Truly this time-glance of the passed is mine
 To manifest or reserve ; divine assent
 To me so much lends ; and just now I heard
 The voice within me bidding show. But know,
 Were I sole servant of the universe,
 As of one starry family, not then
 Could I the pride admit thou feelest, fiend,
 In ruling, or in ruining, one poor soul.
 True kingship's glory is humility,
 Hence, knowing every star, for light no more
 Obstructs here eye angelic, than night man's
 Hinders. I know intuitive all that haps
 Successive in these spheres, time's solar brood

Of state mundane, how many, or how far
Soe'er, in void star-sown ; and every act
Of every soul to God linked, in the passed
Depictured, stored in one vast treasure-house,
The memory of the universe, evoked
At call of Him all-equitable, or one
Who needs, of the heavenly destined ; hold betimes
Converse with angels watchers bright, and hear
Informing whispers from remotest skies
Of world-birth, death-disastrous, growth, decay ;
O'er all, God's will unspoken, but ear and eye
Each alike witnessing to Him, who mute,
Answers by earth-tremblings a people's sins,
And trespasses, by thunderous lava-floods ;
Who shakes the sifted isles o'er death's abyss ;
Rebukes with livid plagues a country's crimes ;
Notes backslidings by tempests ; and with storms
Unseasonable of ice and lightning, posts
His judgments on the many nationed worlds.
Vibrant through solid elements ; or, more mild,
All angelhood with gently prompting touch
Warns, and now me ; that I, of Heaven depute
Thy spirit O mortal, reimbue with sense
Of times long and for ever lapsed, and trace
Of faiths imperfect that in truth evolved
Wholly their sole perfection find. But thee,
Fair spirit I welcome from the Hesperian orb.
And later still from neighbouring spherelet, whence
The interpretative Angel dwells, who skilled
In moral mysteries and miraculous signs
Of solar and of satellite natures, thee
Doubtless accomplished in such lore as yet
Gods blessing, will thee aid, here timely arrived
To advise the soul beloved, through many a star
Fined and so far advanced, as needs but now
One other life, one other death, to crown.
Him therefore, provident of his weal, do thou
Expositress of truth, and loveable friend
Of all souls amiable and pure, with us,
'Neath yon cloud pediment (high o'erarched and bright
With flaming peaks half blinding sight ; but source
Of every primal hue, each dazzling, blent
With other, each outshining all the rest,
As the eye favours that or this ; within
Shadowed by comforting cloudlets of cool mist)
Recluse in this soul clarifying sphere,
View all the ages fore our eyes deployed ;
And Time's star-jewelled cup by mortal lips
Drained to its nectarous lees, sweet as when first
To God's creative word the lucent wave
Essential, sparkled forth, and in the face
Of the All-father smiled ; the eternal passed

Boundless recovery of the ages gone ;
 The draught of recollection from the fount
 Of spiritual reminiscence quaffed. This law,
 How strange soe'er to angel soul it seem,
 Or mind by bodily bondage cramped, we hold
 Holy ; and, inly blazoned in our breast,
 Joy to obey. All this to some good end
 Tends. That ye came for, do ; for such is fate,
 God's law unvoiced or voiced ; and age by age,
 Concurrent with his written, ripely fulfilled.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. A life, a moment, all is doomed of God ;
 The aged growth of empire, and the fall
 Ephemeral of a flower.

ANGELA. That all are here
 Hosts of the blessèd know ; and for what end
 Thou, man, shalt learn, and with profound surprise,
 The volumed ages of the soul unseal ;
 Time's growth concentric reaping at one glance.

FESTUS. Hold we then passed and future in ourselves ?

ANGELA. Truly. Thy future lightly once I limned ;
 Leave given so far. Meanwhile to souls advanced,
 And armed with powers interpretant, to all,
 Given in yon spherelet, of the sun's broad brood
 Brightest, and youngest, nearest to his breast ;
 Souls, there reborn ætherial, and endowed
 With explicative gifts towards all things hidden,
 Which orbital and obsequious spheres perplex
 Of right, just might, and many a mystic knot
 That plainly smoothened out, rich store unfolds,
 Abstract and absolute, of eternal truth ;
 To souls, in sooth, like mine ; who, as I, had lived
 Some certain revolutions, quickly passed,
 Within its orb, 'twas given, and last to me,
 To know, that steps significant of dear earth
 With mine once current, were here due. How told ;
 By stars confederated in air ; or news
 Whispered by wingèd pilgrim on his way
 From sky to sky, was told me not. Enough
 For me. The rest I knew ; and at thought's pace
 Journeying, behold me here.

FESTUS. O beauty, once
 Of earth, but now prospective more of heaven,
 How all thou say'st recalls thy constancy,
 Thy loveable tenderness, attempering truth ;
 For as some primæval stream, earth nourishing once,
 Whose giant bed a continent here conceals,
 Seas, there, efface ; named by no living land,
 Nor mapped its tideway ; but whose course still graved
 Hither, as yond, in monumental mark
 'Neath isle, main, mainland lurks ; my heart's first flow
 Of love, though since by worlds of life, and ebb
 Of years, immemorable, as seems, oppressed,

I yet retrace, and footsteps of the flood.

ANGELA. Forget not : but remember, too, how once
On earth, the fatal mystery thou besoughtst me,
Unconscious what that mystery then comprised,
To ope of thine own nature, while death's seal,
Inviolable on earth, our natal sphere,
Yet iced my lips ; and now wouldst know it still ?

FESTUS. Spirit of beauty, who so late hast known
Death, man's penultimate fate, speak on, nor cease ;
The air thy breath doth hallow, feels to me
Vital with light of truth.

ANGELA. Truth's holy beam
Disperseth passion as the moon full orb'd
The clouds below her dissipates. Let no aim
Less than celestial fix thine eye ; for soul,
Though pre-essential in a bygone sphere,
Or future form, shows still direct from God.

OURIEL. God, when He made the heavens precede the earth,
Made in them all celestial substances,
Angel, and spirit, and life intelligence,
And soul, if deathless pre-existent ; all
With power of gradual perfectness enriched ;
That by successive sense of spherul life,
Refined to common divinity, each might gain
Original bliss. To mortals of thine orb,
O man ! ere now, though few, and many an age
Sundered, hath He the world-wide wave of light
From memory's fount revealed, that sage and seer
And now thyself mightst learn therefrom to live ;
And consciously undeathful, teaching men
Soul purified from love of mortal things,
By an immortal passion, truth from good
And good from truth, each generative of each,
The spiritual sunlife of authentic soul.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Angel, we wait, of this immortal's passed.
Thy world enlightening touch, that rimmed or cored
With light, in shadowy visions, soul may trace
Its marvellous eld ; and on these painted clouds,
Pavilioned round the sky, triumph to come.

ANGELA. Here 'mid this world vast granary of light,
Where the sun's fruitful rays, self harvested,
Look to supply fresh systems yet to be,
Sit we, and thy passed being's shadowy scenes
See, silent, listening to time's tolling tongue.

FESTUS. Silent ? Then these be mysteries.

GUARDIAN ANGEL.

Holy, grand.

LUCIFER. They to their solar secrets ; I to mine ;
And mine intents ; in number minishing,
In matter greatening. Ye will follow soon.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Fear not, but I attend him all due times.

ANGEL. If nought so dear to me be as our passed,
Unless thy future, let me, only intent,

Where'er God's will determine my sojourn,
 On thy course, with all souls of various worth,
 But even on earth by one I trust and love,
 Hast thou to deeds been urged in kind, not show,
 Mighty, and to man's need of faith and peace
 Redounding most ; let me, with these conjured,
 Prevail ; 'tis time, to the end thou knowest, which though
 Matured in secret, wins by wise restraint,
 The somewhere full fruition of all good.

FESTUS. To haste this end might seem to favour self.

ANGEL. If self even sow the seed, man's total kin,
 Shall reap the common field ; nor canst thou gain
 Too soon truth's triumph and faith's world-wide peace.
 Who aims to head the world and on its path,
 Of intellective light and moral, more
 And more approaching truth's blessed day ; to lead
 Humanity's e'er progressive sphere with faith
 More pure and perfect in itself and God,
 Secured ; and sense of righteousness in both
 One ; happier end than hope even dreamed ; of wealth
 Nought coveting, save wealth to make all souls
 Than his own wealthier in soul gifts, of all
 Most needs the mind-force which shall shew him heir
 And hero of Humanity ; and who most
 Its failings feeling, and defects, with powers
 Of kindness substitute shall so enlarge
 Ripe nature, and refine, as shall present
 For every fault a potency ; for all
 Wrongs, jealousies, unjustnesses, attacks,
 Defeats, invasions, rebelries, a roll
 Of inter-racial benefits which henceforth
 Shall bind all peoples in one deed of peace,
 One charter of free brotherliness ; and frame
 Fraternal of all earth's constituent states.
 Then shall thine earth, our Hesper, and all stars,
 Stars of the evening, as, tides passed, of morn,
 Shout forth in songs of joy ; and, so combined
 In the concerted whole, each orb redeemed,
 In the end renewed, shall lift its sunbright head
 High o'er time's flood, and all be conscious heaven.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Who holds not life more yearful than the
 hour

Recurrent annual of his birth might show,
 When first into this world he wept his way
 Errs, doubt not much ; for called of God, man's soul
 In patriarchal periods, comet like,
 Ranges, in lengthening order, many a sphere.
 Here taught, and there to teach forechosen, as armed
 Inly with noblest weapons, gifts of mind,
 Heaven-lavished, wisdom's all beneficent Cause
 Best skilled to aid, most apt to wound to death
 All forms of error ; soul as in itself

Invulnerable, immortal. So with this,
 Whose course we wait thee, spirit of power ! to trace
 The moral light's initiate, truth's adept,
 In spiritual rites perfected ; who seven times
 Bathed in life's luminous fount, and in its light
 Commingled, leavening with his own the world,
 Through all God's holy universe he roamed
 In quest of truth regenerant ; born to instate
 Mankind in veriest faith ; and searching out,
 Through all disguise, the eternal unity ;
 Soul of the world, the spirit that fills all space ;
 Yet dwells within man's heart, the infinite one.

OURIEL. God's providential fates towards earth and man
 Have yet to be consummed ; and these comprise
 More than perchance thou knowest. One element
 Subtracted from the universe, all is death.
 All forms material fade ; all signs, all modes,
 All shapes. The shows of mightiest things shall pass ;
 And nothing but essential deity
 Be and remain.

LUCIFER. The element I foresee
 To be withdrawn seems strangely akin to life,
 And this to me pertains. The end is nigh.
 Heaven justifies my purpose ; and permits
 Herein my action. Life or death, what now
 Matters to me, or any ? All are doomed.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. We, irrespective, each of other's course,
 Work, and One only knoweth how all ends.

LUCIFER. This know I, that I reck not of the passed.
 And for this soul, most chosen, I long have feared
 To watch him was spoiled time. One trial more !
 But Lord ! my spirit expands. I long to test
 Nations at once : a race, a generation.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. So be it. The generation now to be swept
 From life, in fleshly mould, by earth's dread doom,
 The spirits of total man's terrestrial strain,
 He added, whom I still tend on, God permits,
 As he from first vouchsafed to approve to all,
 And thee, divulsive of the world of life,
 Its kind and end. Counsel divine I speak
 Those souls secure who prove by sovereign grace
 God's will, not to necessity thrall, but he
 Lord even of destiny, and source of fate.

FESTUS. Such and so grand soul's long career surveyed
 Through time that here in light's eternal noon
 First see I all things clear ; from end to end
 Humanity's cycle half divine ; begun
 In one soul's dumb commune with Heaven, and closed
 With all perfections of the countless race,
 See spirit and soul, mind, life, flesh, feeling, mix
 Reciprocate as the elements ; see how flow
 The streams of feeling ; passion's cataracts ;

How rise, how sink, mine, mountain ; this of pride
And that of covetise. Truth is man to know,
The human universe, and the divine and fate
Central, that all must be fulfilled, which is
Of nature ; sin and strife ; destruction, change ;
And righteousness and peace, ere earth, (all things
Are means for greater good) can take new life ;
Or man, God's minister become. Not less,
If heaven and all its stars depend on earth,
Then may eternity on time ; but time's
An atom of eternity ; and earth
A crumb of Heaven ; both segments of the orb
Of being created, emanant from God,
Whose flowings forth are aye and infinite,
But voluntary in act ; and so enjoy
Illimitable duration, free to live
Distinct in tried existence, or return
After life's long protracted strifes and tests
Or this, or that to its parent source ; but pends
Neither, on other ; each responsible sole
To its lord all equitable. One only truth
Hath paramount consequence, God's truth how kept,
Inspired in man. The world may act,
Believe, bless, curse its way, as best it lists ;
Expend a vain life solemnizing points
Uncertain as the site of Paradise, §
Or area of Hades ; to its own
Judgment, such self-imposed, it stands or falls.
Nor need it wholly doubt ; of one thing sure
Expect in time or place whate'er it may,
To those whose eyes are opened e'er so little
No future disappointment can be more
Than that we are now to ourselves. Men make their hearts
Centres of all hopes, powers, designs ; nor deign
Scarce life to circumscribe, so vast his thought
Of his own merits, mindful not that points
Perfect are points imaginary, nor are,
Save as intelligible ; substantial not.
Draw therefore life as best we may, to make
The imperfect notions of perfection pair ;
Round as a world or as an atom round,
Pure as some virgin visionary's dream
Of sainthood sociable with changeful love,
Or faith's regenerative wave, with power
Endowed of granting safety, conquering death,
It fails to match the true invisible
We labour of, we boast, but bring not forth.
Let this with me have passed away, all doubt
Henceforth indifferent hath no interest. Love
What only is certain I. Soul sundered here
From all my race, and dread with doubt defined ;
(Hence fiery shadows ! I have outlived ye once)

I have left all for one ; truth's needled rays
 For truth's one sphere, the mean for the supreme ;
 The dubitable powers that soul now serve
 With adulative assistance and now rule
 Rudely, proofs asked authentic of descent,
 And lineage loftier than gods could show,
 I have quit for wisdom, sovran power, orb-throned,
 Yet here I may not rest ; nor selfish seek
 Mine own perfection sole. The mightiest sphere
 Is not for man the best. Mind's elements,
 And matter's, sire and mother these of things,
 Are in all worlds proportioned ; best on earth ;
 And earth hath favour over crowds of stars ;
 Earth let me then reseek. It suits not now
 To plunge in pleasure, or to passion stoop,
 The lion honey of the heart, which speaks,
 And lurks in, life corrupted. Thirst no more
 For knowledge universal now the heart
 Distracts ; nor shallow gaiety dulls ; nor meet
 I' the brain, with dizzying mixture. Be it mine
 To hope not yet all things conclude ; nor speed
 Fate's broad winged bolt ; but, from its living bow,
 God's lips, still there detained the unerring word.

 XXXVII.

Earth regained,
 And lonesea-shore where the great waves come in
 Frothed like a horse put to his heart-burst speed,
 Sobbing up-hill, note we, his ends frustrate ;
 How evil, who liar, accuser, tempter, known
 Deceiver proven, his title of murderer to earn
 Man's hater, God's most, works his victim's death,
 Reckless of promised boons ; ingrate ! Fell deed ;
 By guardian powers of good to good o'erruled.
 Struck thrice by loved one's death, give sorrow way,
 What fleshly gods, or perishable, can yield,
 The heart consolement ? Fly to solitude.
 Only the desert can drink up love's tears.

Garden and Bower by the Sea. Evening.

ELISSA, LUCIFER ; afterwards FESTUS.

ELISSA. God, by whose elements holy and undefiled
 I, too, clear-lifed as they, now stand, nor shrink
 These primal powers to face unveiled, and mix
 Aweless, with nature's grand integrities,
 Of no sin conscious ; how else dare I breathe
 This air ætherial, vivid, which thy throne
 Circling, to us from far descends, peace-winged ;—

How tread this earth thy cloudy feet o'erspace,
 Unwearyable ;—this tameless, termless sea,
 Heaven imaging,—like the eternal mind which made,
 Embosoming in reflection all its works—
 How, confident, bear to embrace,—I, hopeful e'er
 'Neath thy strong guard to abide, could I not now
 In vital contact with the infinite mind,
 Through innocence, thee, pure Lord, seek? Hear!—and grant
 That while with these and thee at one, the soul,—
 Accepted, suffering with yon sun, baptized
 To daily death, which yet from burying bath
 Rises regenerate, and to awakening worlds
 Shows as the light immortal,—may, itself
 A morning ray shot forth, at eve, resumed
 By the world-quickenning spirit whose beams are life,
 Eye, undisturbed, its end, and so with dread
 No more than scathe, the mortal change endure
 Which trains us towards perfection ; and, in turn
 Our atomie to the life celestial adds ;
 Our instant to the eternal. I, by dreams
 Divining, and night's palpable visions, know
 Joy unexpected and reunion blessed,
 With strange premonishment of death, confuse
 My soul as though were sought a sacrifice
 Of one assured best of the offerer's love,
 And dearest the demanding deity. Strange,
 This struggle of free emotion and fixed faith.
 Come, Festus, let me think, my love, on thee !
 Why art thou thus away from me so long ?
 I have whispered it unto the southern wind,
 And charged it with my love : why should it not
 Carry that love to thee as air bears light ?
 And thou hast said I was all light to thee.
 The stars grow bright together, and for aye,
 Loverlike, watch each other ; and though apart,
 Like us, they fill each other's eyes with love
 And beauty : but mine only fill with tears.
 Oh ! life were nothing without love ; and love
 What without love's embrace ? Haste, haste thee, love.

One taste of thy dewy lips, my love,
 Would far more gladden me
 Than a draught of the waters, in heaven above,
 Of immortality.
 Then oh come hither to me, my love !
 Back to this bosom, dear ;
 It is burning for thee, though thy love be dead,
 Widow-like on her lord's death-bier.

One touch of thy gentle hand, sweet feere !
 One glance of thy glowing eye,
 One pitying word, oh, one pardoning tear,
 And I've nothing to do but to die ;

But to die in the bliss of thy breast, my love,
 Like a flower to the gods which is given ;
 That was happy in life, and is holy in death,
 For it dies on an altar of heaven.

And be it that I should die, and whensoever,
 My life, love, I bequeath to thee, that thine
 Redoubling, I may alway live with thee.
 Nay, but I feel I am dying ; and dreams too true.
 This sense of life-loss ! From out the firmament
 Of visible things, my life fast faints away
 Into dim nothingness ; nature's self my fate
 Prefiguring in the mid-day moon I marked,
 This noontide, stealing nightwards. And, as ghost
 Caught tampering with the truth, and straight dismissed
 By some austere exorcist, shuddering, turns
 Its shadowy face to Hades, never more
 With man to mix, nor earth's familiar scenes
 Haunt, once so cherished ; but bidden prepare for pains
 Soul-bracing, while they rack, and richening fines,
 Would yet life lavish in one exhaustive gaze
 On things too dear ; so I, forewarned this world
 To quit, quit still reluctant ; while as yet,
 Like a morn-loitering masquer tracked and mocked
 By the tell-tale light, who hopes, yet dreads his home,
 I, all-while conscious of divine love lost
 For human, blame my heart. Heart ! thou that makest me
 Live, 'tis thou killest. Let me but, ere I die,
 See him I love. He must know how I love him.
 Festus ! come to me. I do think I am dying :
 I see him,—in brain-sight, him coming to me now ;
 Now he is thinking of me, loving me ;
 He sees me—flies to me half out of breath ;
 His hand is on my arm—he looks on me ;
 And puts my long locks backwards—God ! thy ban
 Lies upon waking dreams. To weep and sleep ;
 Dream—wake, and find one's only one hope false,
 Is what we can brook, for we do endure it,
 And bear with heaven still. Nigh one year ago,
 I watched that large bright star, much where 'tis now :
 Time hath not touched its everlasting lightning,
 Nor dimmed the glorious glances of its eye ;
 Nor passion clouded it, nor any star
 Eclipsed ; it is the leader still of heaven.
 And I who loved it then can love it now ; }
 But am not what I was, in one degree.
 Calm star ! who was it named thee Lucifer,
 From him who drew the third of heaven down with him ?
 Oh ! it was but the tradition of thy beauty !
 For if the sun hath one part, and the moon one,
 Thou hast the third part of the host of heaven—
 Which is its power—which power is but its beauty !
 LUCIFER. It was no tradition, lady, but of truth !

ELISSA. I thought we parted last to meet no more.

LUCIFER. It was so, lady ; but it is not so.

ELISSA. Am I to leave, or thou, then ?

LUCIFER.

Neither, yet.

ELISSA. And who art thou that I should fear and serve ?

LUCIFER. I am the morning and the evening star,
The star thou lovedst ; thy lover too ; as once
I told thee incredulous ; star and spirit I am ;
A power, an ill which doth outbalance being.
Behold life's tyrant evil, peer of good ;
The great infortune of the universe.
Am I not more than mortal in my form ?
Millions of years have circled round my brow,
Like worlds upon their centres ;—still I live ;
And age but presses with a halo's weight.
This single arm hath dashed the light of heaven ;
This one hand dragged the angels from their thrones :
Am I not worthy to have loved thee, lady ?
Thou mortal model of all heavenliness !
Yet all these spoils have I abandoned, cowered
My powers, my course becalmed, and stooped from the high
Destruction of the skies for thee, and him
Who loving thee is with thee lost, both lost.
Thou hast but served the purpose of the fiend ;
Art but the gilded vessel of selfish sin
Whose poison hath drunken made a soul to death :
Thou, useless now. I come to bid thee die.

ELISSA. Wicked, impure, tormentor of the world,
I knew thee not. Yet doubt not thou it was
Who darkenedst for a moment with base aim
God to evade, and shun in this world, man,
Love's heart ; with selfish end alone redeeming
Me from the evil, the death-fright. Take, nathless,
One human soul's forgiveness, such the sum
Of thanks I feel for heaven's great grace that thou
From the overflowings of love's cup mayst quench
Thy breast's broad burning desert, and fertilize
Aught may be in it, that boasts one root of good.

LUCIFER. It is doubtless sad to feel one day our last.

ELISSA. I knew, forewarned, I was dying. God is good.
The heavens grow darker as they purer grow,
And both, as we approach them ; so near death,
The soul grows darker and diviner hourly.
Could I love less, I should be happier now.
But always 'tis to that mad extreme, death
Alone appears the fitting end to bliss
Like that my spirit presseth for.

LUCIFER.

Thy death

Gentle shall be as e'er hath been thy life.
I'll hurt thee not, for once upon this breast,
Fell, like a snowflake on a fevered lip,
Thy love. Thy soul shall, dreamlike, pass from thee.

One instant, and thou wakest in heaven for aye.

ELISSA. Lost, sayest thou in one breath, and saved in heaven.

LUCIFER. Whatever my words, God's are true. With him
Good heavenly, heavenly bliss, eternal are ;
While all created things, if to these false,
Perish ; perdition even perisheth.

ELISSA. Thee one good deed I owe for.

LUCIFER. With thy life

I now myself repay.

ELISSA. But that still leaves
Me debtor.

LUCIFER. No ; to thee the deed was due.
Time's orbit turns recurvant. It may be,
A consciousness of restorative power
Ingrains and gladdens all life. Not aught is lost
For ever. All nature knows its end, not less
Than source divine ; and I, by truth in me
Dimly refract, what may be from what must
Arguing, feel thou it is hast given me hopes
Of ultimate possibilities, scarce I dare
Breathe to myself in darkness.

ELISSA. Hast thou hopes ?

LUCIFER. Like the first shower which cooled the burning plain,
Where Jove o'erthrew the giants, and high God,
Giving o'er dumb-struck volcans, leave to earth
To outspread her mantle green, the moss to nurse,
And dandle lichen, where he had e'er, till then,
Hailed rocks ; thy words once wrought a blessing here ;
And caused the indelible germ of good, howe'er
Minute, which cored in all create abides,
Spring forth to lightwards. Fruited it not in time ?

ELISSA. Truly. Be all forgiven ; as now to thee
I pardon grant for this ill boon of death ;
If inescapable.

LUCIFER. Fate hath nought more sure.

ELISSA. The world is heaving with the earthquake throes
Of some portentous birth, some form of power,
Whose orb'd head is to o'ertop all thrones.
Am I not bound to live till that I see
I have wrought for, longed for, prayed for ?

LUCIFER. No ! thou art bound
To die. I, too, see darkness, only at times,
As sacred night begins all things and ends.
But here, thine end's too clear, clear as the lines
Of fate, to palmist's eye, which cross the hand.

ELISSA. I ever thought thee to be more than mortal.
And since thus mighty, grant me, and thou mayst
This one, this only boon, as friend to friend ;
Bring him I love, one moment ere I die ;
Life, love, all his.

LUCIFER. And is't to him thou vowest
Thy nature's sweets ? Nay, then, this queenly life

With love perfected, as yon gold gemmed vase,
 By lustrous flowers encrowned, all fragrance, makes
 An offering fit for shrines, a gift for gods,
 'Tis time were sent for sanctuary, on high.
 Thou judgest well. All but almighty I am,
 And have strained my strength to its verge to satisfy
 His heart who loved thee ; gave I not up to him thee ?
 Reigns he not even at this sad moment there,
 Or possibly may, and if he please, not else—
 King of the sun, and monarch of the sever
 Orbs that surround him, leaving earth alone,
 For the present ; earth is in good keeping yet ?
 I know he is hasting hither now ; he comes ;
 But may not see thee living.

ELISSA. It is not thou
 Who takest life ; it is God, whose I shall be ;
 And his, with God, whom here my heart deifies,
 I glory in his power. He'll save me.

LUCIFER. Cease !
 As a wind-flaw, darting from some rifted cloud,
 Seizes upon a water-patch mid main,
 And into white wrath worries it, so my mind
 This petty controversy distracts. He comes,
 I say, but never shalt thou view him, living.

ELISSA. But I will, will see him, and while I am alive.
 I hear him. He is come.

LUCIFER. The end of things
 Are urgent. Still, to this mortuary deed
 Reluctant, fix I death's black seal. He's here !

ELISSA. I hear him ; he is come ; it is he ; it is he !

LUCIFER. Die graciously, as ever thou hast lived ;
 Die, thou shalt never, look upon him again.

ELISSA. My love ! haste, Festus ! I am dying.

LUCIFER. Dead !

As ocean racing fast and fierce to reach
 Some headland, ere the moon with maddening ray
 Forestal him, and rebellious tides excite
 To vain strife, nor of the innocent skiff that thwarts
 His path, aught heeds, but with dispiteous foam
 Wrecks deathful ; I, made hasty by time's end
 Impending, thus fill up fate's tragic form.

A word could kill her. See, she hath gone to heaven.

FESTUS. Fiend ! what is this ? Elissa ! She is not dead.

LUCIFER. She is. I bade her die, as I had reason.

FESTUS. Now o'er the bosom of this death, I swear,
 God's will and mine one moment harmonized,
 I hate thee, I abhor thee, I abjure
 Thee and thy works.

LUCIFER. Who seeks the other, first ?
 I can't afford to quarrel ; but for the nonce
 I am gone.

FESTUS. Away, fiend ! Leave me. Mine Elissa !

LUCIFER. Meet me in city or in solitude,
By sea, or desert where pale marble shafts
Stud the hot sands, or, fallen, earth's generous springs
Imposthumously, forewaste,—enough ! we meet.

FESTUS. Thy bolts fall heavily on me, Lord ! and fast.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. O steeds of passion, whirl not reason's car
From life's precipitous marge into the void
Of madness.

FESTUS. Sole in life !—save as to one
I may not think of. Let me 'scape the world.
O weary, weary world, hide thou in heaven ;
Search out some nebulous depth where thou mayst leave
Thy holy ashes ; I some shore or isle
In ocean's spatial distance, seek, where plunged
In penitence, this my burning heart, like steel
In the wave retempered, may, by solitude
Concentrate, purified, thenceforth the new life
Of heaven inaugurate, hallow, and all fates
Again face, grace directing, to their end.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. By judgments such as these God calls to
himself
The soul he loves. Do thou thy spirit serene,
Meanwhile, by holiest place and saintliest shrine,
Wherein and midst the memories to them due
Thy spirit may raise itself to thoughts divine,
Untamperable.

FESTUS. Such comfort much I need,
Good angel ! such restoratives. Bear with me.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. All things are means for greater good ; from
laws
Which gall not, but yet curve thine orbèd limbs,
O Sun ! to laws which frame the atom's core.
For laws enclose all liberties ; and leave
Scope for soul's choice eternal through all worlds.
Free will is life's determinant. But to make
Eternity absolute, depend on acts
Of momentary years, were Heaven to hold,
And all its stars, create but to serve earth.
Earth's but a crumb of Heaven, and time a sole
Atom of th' whole Eternity owns ; nor pends
That upon this irrelatively ; the twain
One essence being, emanant from God,
Whose flowings forth are aye and infinita.

XXXVIII.

God only can heal the bruised spirit, and yield
 Peace. By the overthrown altar of a fane,
 Foundation shattered, which from faith to faith
 Translate, e're consecrate still stands, we join
 In mystic worship secretly. Let us trust
 All, worship, form and offering grateful. Stone
 Untooled; untouched, unless by nature's hand,
 By man reared, solitary; mound, pyramid,
 Tower, temple, obelisk, stony cirque, and spire
 To one fact witness, that as sun and moon
 Fill, with their light, space, so twin truths man's mind
 Through time possess; God's onemostness, and our
 Immortal life. To soul saved, time's no more
 An opponent section of duration, summed
 In separate column from the eternal. All's
 Eternity, is concentric with our life.

A Ruined Temple, surrounded by Sands.

FESTUS, LUCIFER; afterwards GUARDIAN ANGEL.

FESTUS. Surely this site's thrice holy; lingers round
 These walls the sense of prayer, prayer proffered, prayer,
 Answered; the accumulate air of awe which fills,
 All where the ancient sanctuary of God.
 Here will I worship solely.

LUCIFER. It is a fane
 Once sacred to the sun since consecrate
 To the cross; deserted now, it is open quite
 To the next comer.

FESTUS. There's no next to come,
 Save He who is always here. It matters not
 That false god here may have truly been adored
 Or true God falsely served; nor by what rites
 Life hating or life nourishing, or with sign
 Simplest of corn, oil, wine, or fruit and flower.
 The truly holy soul which hath once received
 God's all transcendent gift, the imparted sense
 Of unitive life with him can hallow here
 Whatever creed it owns; even this wrecked fane,
 Thrice widowed of its god; whate'er the shrine.
 But whether rude, or in art perfect; fane
 Concentric or elliptic; earth-mound; shrine,
 Burrowing beneath, to ghostly gods devote;
 Or minster towers, wind-loved, man's creed confess,
 As run the ages ages down; not less what late
 Of Theo-human being, ere all time,
 And all incarnate emanations. seed
 Of rainbow or of lily, or sunbeam, priest
 Or prophet taught these stones, than in times long gone,
 Of mediatorial Light, heaven's orbèd god,
 Sunning though feebly, death's black void with ray

Too sadly numerable ; for all remains,
 It is man's devotion saints the shrine he haunts,
 The final faith I am here to preinstate,
 For times Time sole can sum. Albeit for me,
 In years passed, and till now, for general men,
 The dominant faith sufficed, the kindly crowd,
 Of worshipping mien devout, the gorgeous rite,
 The genuflective wave, the common awe,
 The scent of incense, hymns and harmonies
 O' the sanctuary, yet knowing somewhat still
 More amiable, the secret of the soul,
 Commune alone with God, me here behold
 Seas, deserts, crossed, to appeal to in this shrine
 Oracular of old days, my soul's one trust ;
 What, Lord, wouldst now I do, with this my life
 Forlorn, my soul forsworn, both false to Thee ?
 To pour forth my soul's worship, and to God
 Give witness of earth's eldest, youngest faith ;
 Known alway to the wise if by them hidden,
 Who feared the excess of freedom, as of truth
 To men less sage ; but destined all to outlast ;
 With Heaven co-ordinate only ; base of all
 From the beginning ; of all now sum and crown ;
 God's oneness infinite, his kind fatherhood
 In all worlds as in this, of spiritual soul :
 Man's brotherhood in this life, and in the next
 Heaven's merciful judgment ; one sole moral law
 O'er earth ; and peace promoted here, the proof
 Prospective of man's spiritual peace with God.
 Each orb is to itself the heart of heaven ;
 And each belief, wherein man roots his hope,
 And lives and dies, God's favourite. What if here,
 Of yore, before this shrine, the sun's pure priest,
 And all his prostrate worshippers, knew their god
 Fire-bodied, but grossly ; conqueror of the shades,
 Of earth bright purifier ; invoking thee,
 O sun ! as glory of air, and lord of light !
 Fountain and fane of heaven's immortal fire ;
 Lord of the upper world and lower ; judge
 Strict, incorruptible ; giving every land
 Just wealth of light ; due service from each soul
 Exacting ; showing all, high, low, like love ;
 King of the life to come, immortal ; soul
 Treating with purifying penalties ;
 Great wonder-worker ; seer of all the skies ;
 The gates of whose house are the east and the west :
 The ever-coming light, bright mystery ;
 Sense binding, mind attracting, passion taming ;
 Light born, light generating, light all life ;
 Whom God begat on light which first he loved,
 Encircling in himself ; but who in shades
 Of primal night wast nursed ; whom all time's hours

Attend ; whose travel beneficent round the world
 Makes one eternal triumph ; unto whom
 All earth is sacred ;—Yes ! O sun to thee
 One vast and living garden of the Lord,
 Watered by light streams, where the vine divine
 Fruits, inexhaustible, for the wise ; and where
 Shepherd of worlds, and harmonist of heaven,
 The music of whose golden lyre is light ;
 With pastures varied, thrives thy starry flock,
 Numbered complete, in spiritual perfectness
 Inviolable ; in multitude of days
 Deathless, as in thy years thou O nightlayer ;
 Whose car the elements draw ; from whom all signs
 And natural miracles joyously proceed ;
 Whose eloquent fire lights aye their starry heads
 That, in celestial conclave with thee ruling,
 Pour down, on darkness' crown, original light ;
 Whose gospels are the seasons, all thy twelve
 In spherul order and a chain starlinked,
 Through gods, kings, signs, gems, toils, tribes, messengers,
 Heroes and peers, the universe uniting
 To thee in love, thy being's boundless law ;
 Thy Maker's synonym ; his symbol thou :—
 Whose offspring are the ages, and whose years
 Links of the everlasting chain of change
 Thou bindst us with, progenitor of spheres ;—
 To whom time's azure serpent, starry scaled
 And noiseless creeping, that its years now sloughs
 In thy reviving brightness, and now lays
 Its world-eggs in thine incubant rays, we hold
 Hallowed, because of thee inspired with life ;
 Whose quickening touch all life, soulless or souled,
 Draws up towards thee all generative ; of pest
 And death, dispeller ; life elicitor ;
 World-navelled oracle, whose sensible beam
 O'erpatent, oft the strongest eye blinds ; oft
 Godlike, death-darting, life reclaims through the aye
 Revolving universe and evolving. This,
 The faith of honest ignorance, yet with sense
 Of thanks for good received, and things create
 Misprising for their Maker, in a rude
 Shallow belief which gladdened not the soul,
 Raised not, sustained, nor inly enlightened, passed ;
 To a nobler creed transformed, that thenceforth hailed
 In the material heavens but shadowy types
 Of spiritual truths more solid ; and in shapes
 Of hero and saint, light's natural qualities,
 Truth, power and purity moralled ; in the sun
 The source of all things through vast mysteries sought,
 Their meaning and their end ; from thee, O sun !
 Child of the infinite firmament, conceived
 A filial god, laborious for man's good ;

Unwearyable on earth as in the skies ;
 Hero and victor of the universe ; thou,
 Who at thy birth didst slay sin's serpent brood ;
 And through the foul stalled stable of this world's life,
 The sourceless, circular, river of thy love
 Didst turn ; redeem the soul of man thy friend
 From death and hell ; destroy the dragon fiend
 With the seven deadly heads, devouring life ;
 Regain thy golden apples, paradise ;
 And, to complete the mystic cycle, rise
 Well proven, and approved of God, to heaven :—
 Of whose divine end emulous, we, too, tried
 By choice of virtue over pleasurable vice,
 Though now by passionate sins distraught, and now
 Soul-soiled by waste subservience to mean aims,
 From God estranged, yet longing to return,
 And brighten again the spirit by strict contact
 With heaven's original ray, might sometime find,
 Having here lived beneficently 'mong men,
 Merited acceptance. Not sufficing this,
 Man's soul which speculatively had erst conceived
 The light unlimited, whose most ancient sheen
 Beamed forth man spiritual, angelic mind,
 Intelligent life, life sentient, and, less pure,
 Still from God emanant, matter, form and all
 This universe in its oval orbit holds,—
 The light intelligible conceived on earth
 Incarnate ; light, before whose orient ray
 The gods all vanished like night's ghosts ; light sole,
 Sun spiritual ; source not only of life and light
 Worldly, but soul-regenerative ; whom all
 The lives of all the elements, lamb, fish, dove ;
 Earth all productive ; life requickenening air ;
 The purifying wave, perfective fire ;
 Whom all earth's faiths and creeds, rites, gods of old,
 Foreshadowed personate as a child of man,
 In precognition of eternal truth
 Made deathless ; whom and his, the world foretyped,
 One all-comprising prophecy ; the moon,
 Virgin of heaven, who nightly bringeth forth
 The light, thine own, O sun ! in heaven to earth ;
 Morn's herald star, imbathing earth in dew,
 And the sun leading into the desert sea,
 To his eternal baptism, ere with light
 He floods the world, and cleaves the breathing skies
 With inspirative fire ; earth, weeping set,
 Sin-shamed, self-humbled, like the penitent one
 Below his cross, the darkness of whose death
 Eclipsed all day ; these, and light's whole bright flock,
 Before thy crucial exaltation fled,
 But born of light, predestined yet to range
 In bliss the spirit-pasturing skies ; to quaff

Serene, the waters of the sun ; and yet
 Catch his vivific secret, as he beams
 Resurgent, from the entombing wave ; that grave
 Thou, daily dying, dost, night by night, o'erpass
 Into the invisible halls men dread ; but whence,
 O Hadëan god, death-hidden in dark and chill,
 Eastering, again thou comest with joy ;—foretyped,
 All signs, all seasons, records but of thee,
 And of thy deeds divine and dignities,
 Soul-embleming : twin being, God with man,
 Whose doubled nature indicates in heaven
 Natural and spiritual ; who holdst unmoved
 The balance of the all-just One o'er the world,
 Well weighing work and faith ; with scorpion sting
 Treating the carnal conscience self-condemned ;
 Who bendst the heavens before thee like a bow
 And earth thine orbèd arrow shoot'st through air ;
 Who from celestial fountains pourest floods
 Of grace regenerative ; who to thyself,
 Produced by thee, earth's twin chief boons of life
 Dost sanctify for sustenance and for joy,
 Symbols of soul and body, that both be known
 In him thou too but symbollest, God. But these,
 Enthusiasts of a composite creed who sought
 The impossible with too easy to imblend,
 And difficulty soul-bracing scape, but failed
 With speculative conceits to unreason faith,
 Learned liberally at last the simpler truth
 Whereby we recognize as one of heaven's
 Star peers the sphere we dwell in, and yon sun
 Know, too, as not above us ; we are upon
 The same proud level ; by the same laws constrained ;
 Of the like roots compact. Who therefore knows
 Soul-freed, all stars but steps in heaven's great scale,
 Up to God's throne from time's last orb which eyes
 The inner and the utter infinite round
 To that highest deepest midmost site where heaven's
 Star-music ends, for ever quelled in the sun's
 Silence supreme ; knows happily too, that through
 All spherul forms, the centre searching soul,
 Circling in bright expansive progress, fit
 To match the march of angels in time's van,
 By-passing all night's constellated chart
 Where God hath set his burning seal the sun,
 And all delights of merely intelligent life,
 In spirit conquests self-purifying skilled,
 Reseeks thee, lone and universal light,
 Spiritual, divine, deific ; even as at first
 Creative, all conclusive ; with dread hope
 Persistent, individually, to acquire
 Clear glory, and midst the all-involving heavens
 Share preapportioned rule. Now dawns the day

When natural faiths and typical both outworn
 Man's spirit sight by eyebright of the stars,
 And rue celestial cleared, one deity sole,
 One spirit throughout the globe shall name ; one Power
 Beyond all being ; of all worlds sire and heir ;
 Sole Saviour of the world of life he hath made ;
 Whose breath from servile matter framed at first
 The fading frostwork of created things.
 Earth's tale is told in heaven ; heaven's told in earth.
 Since either 'gan, though thousand tribes have chosen
 A thousand types, one sole true faith hath been,
 The faith of all in God. Let earth, henceforth,
 To its right creed re-oriented, the faith
 Which, world-comprising, soul-sufficing, wise
 Spirits are taught of rational light,—confess
 Things all may symbols, each of other, be,
 Nothing of God. To this joyed eye, the hour
 Already, hawklike, preens its wing for flight,
 When all shall be remassed in one great creed,
 All spirit shall yet be rebegotten ; all
 Worship rededicate, time's degenerate lapse
 Twice having fused the symbol with the truth ;
 All dark things brightened ; all contrariants blent ;
 And truth and love, perradiating all life
 Be the new poles of nature ; earth, at last
 Joining the great procession of the skies.
 Now, therefore to the sole true God, in man,
 In nature timely manifested, these walls
 Shall echo praise, if never yet. Attend.
 Bring me a morsel of the fire without.
 For I a sacred offering unto God
 Will make, as high priest of the world. He lacks not
 At best hands, consecration, whom thou, Lord !
 By choice hast hallowed ; and these elements
 I offer, thou hast holy made, by making.

LUCIFER. Lo, fire ! I wait thee in the air.

FESTUS.

Withdraw.

Eternal, infinite Spirit, hear thou, heaven-throned,
 While one, by thy divine salvation graced,
 A servant of thy boundless law of love,
 This temple redevotes to a purer end
 Than they who built or who abandoned knew.
 Thine Lord are all the elements, all the worlds ;
 The sun thy bounteous servant, and the moon
 Thy servant's servant ; the round rushing earth ;
 This lifeful air ; these thousand wingèd winds ;
 Fire, heaven-kinned ; continental clouds ; the sea
 Broad-breasted, tranced lake ; and rivers rich,
 Arterial ; sky-crowned, shadow-haunted hills,
 Their woody tresses waving on the breeze,
 Grateful, in sign of worship ; all are thine.
 Thine are the snow robed mountains girdling earth

As the white spirits God our Saviour's throne ;
 Thine the bright secrets central in all orbs,
 And rudimental mysteries of sphere life,
 Fire misted, nebulous. The sun starred night,
 Day all prevailing, ever maiden morn,
 Consummate eve, earth's varying seasons aye
 Confess them thine, through the life gladdening world.
 All art hath wrought from earth, or science lured
 From truth, like flame out of the firecloud ; all
 Man's thought, man's toil, man's deeds, his best of thee
 Inspired, of thee foreplanned all nature, are
 Thine ; thine the glory ; all of thee conceived,
 Things finite, infinite, to thee belong,
 As mountains to a world, as worlds to heaven.
 City high domed and pompous ; populous town,
 Toilful, and early hamlet ; all that live
 Or die : decay or flourish ; change, or stand
 Unchanged, before thy face, heaven's starry hosts
 Thy ministry of light, for thee exist,
 Or, at thy bidding, are not. Thine, all cause
 Evil, or best, of every orb ; all ends
 Forebalanced, yet preponderate so towards good
 As all events to adjust : thine Lord ! all souls ;
 Thought, atom, world, the universe thine ; thou yet
 Thine eye, all hallowing, canst as easily turn
 From comprehending the bright infinite,
 To this crushed temple, where the wild flower decks
 Its earthquake rifted walls, and birdlets build
 In leafage of its columned capitals,
 And to this crumbling heart I offer here,
 As trust thine own eternity. Behold !
 Accept, I pray thee Lord ! this sacrifice ;
 These elemental offerings, simple, pure,—
 A branch, a flowery turf, a burning coal,
 A cup of water and an empty bowl,—
 I, in man's name, make filially to thee,
 Formless, save kneeling heart, save prostrate soul,
 In token of thine all perfect monarchy
 And world comprising mercy, of us confessed.
 This air-filled bowl, of the world typical, thou
 With thy good spirit replenishest, and the soul
 Receptive of thy life conferring truth ;
 This, the symbolic element, whence, reborn,
 Made pure, thy chosen are first regenerate
 Out of men's mighty multitudes, yet all
 As of one nature be redeemed ; this coal,
 From the earth torn flaming, which thy mercy, sin
 Consuming, as of earth proclaims ; and these
 Pale flamelets, starwards tending, emblem just
 Of spirit aspiring Godwards ; this mere turf
 As the earthy nature and abode we would
 Subject to thee, here living, though type obscure,

Yet representative of heaven's every star,
 And world extended matter ; all these in one
 Sole, simple oblation proffered ;—last, this branch,
 High flourishing over all, let this, Lord ! sign
 Thine own eternal son Humanity,
 Twin-natured with the angels, which all spheres
 Pervading, and on earth part mortal, part,
 In Heaven exists immortal by thy will,
 Redemptive of all being ; the golden branch—
 Rootless in self, grafted only in deity,—
 Of life's eternal tree, seer's, sibyl's, word
 Inspired of old, full of dark central thought
 And mystic truth, foretold should overspread
 The spirit world, death's every wound, with its fruit
 Healing :—all, offering, offerer, Lord ! accept.
 Nor these of natural birth as 'neath thine hand
 Pure and munificent framed, hold thou to thee
 Sole acceptable ; but these, corn, olive, grape,
 By sumptuous man manipulate into food,
 Whereby we strengthen ourselves to endure for thee
 This bodily life, and use as best we may,
 Deign thou to look upon, and so sanctify
 With thine all hallowing glance ; for, taught by seer,
 Priest, hierophant of old, thou, walking earth,
 Shrinking thyself to shape create, calf, lamb
 Or kid, with angels and god-messengers
 Partaking, drinking wine and breaking bread,
 So tokening man's divinity humane,
 And thy divine humanity, we know
 Didst, in all forms of being, the force convey
 Of holiest goodness ; thine essential life
 Pervading all the elements of the world ;
 Thine actual all-presence in every heart,
 Lift choicefully to thee. So now and here,
 By usance of like signs communion whole
 Of bodily powers and spiritual, God ! with thee
 Maker, regenerator, we ask :—ask, too,
 This gift, Lord ! that if men can nought but sin,
 Forgive the creature crime,—fruit this of soul
 Imperfect, but by thee create, which takes
 From thee its whole capacity,—and bring back
 To thy breast world-parent ! who madest the whole,
 And wilt remould all, purified, to thee.
 Wherefore, in spirit of this kind faith, baptized,
 Faith, world embracing, soul sufficing, faith,
 Wherein the vortices of all variant creeds
 As eddies in the sea are lost, let me,
 Let both Lord ! gladden within ourselves ; thou, God !
 Who joyest to view the living world, endowed
 As with thine own vitality, although
 Insentient of its mighty source, because
 Reflective of thine attributes ; but man

Most, as the living mirror, which conceives
 From thy vivific beam the rational ray
 Conscious, whereby we, cognizant of thee,
 Light of thy light, our crowning glory gain ;
 Thou, thy chief joy. Exchanging therefore sense
 Of life undying, and sureness of the truth,
 Thine infinite unity, which doth underlie
 The world's wide walls, the truth which, uttered, opens
 All-where a paradise, to man collegued
 In brotherly worship of the invisible one,
 Father of all immortal spirits, 'twixt whom
 And him, love mutual mediateth alone ;
 We joy, as those of old, who, in mysteries
 Initiate, ranked as gods. For now, of ours
 Taught truest, and thou, sun, the innocent cause
 Of faith's first error, from celestial things
 Deposed, and made to man subservient, we,
 Time's childish ignorance passed, and earth's vain lore
 Symbolic, mythical, shadowy, put away
 As holy enigmas merely, do yet confess
 That though word written, or sign, be born no more,
 The spirit's revelation still proceeds,
 Evolving all perfection ; and that while
 We bless thee, God our Saviour, sole, who madest,
 And making, couldst no other thought than good
 Of creatural life conceive ; for evil is not,
 Not even as thought, in thee conceivable ;
 And whatso'er their transient mean of time,
 Expert in failure, needing more of good,
 The nearer they the all perfect light approach
 We, bounded spirits, confess the infinite Spirit,
 And antiformal, needs no word, nor lacks
 Whereby to mark its union with the soul ;
 For, kindled like a sacrifice of old,
 By heaven's spontaneous fire, the soul achieves,
 In inspiration, being's highest end ;
 Save that accomplished in death's final cause,
 With God reunion. Hope whereof, thou Lord !
 Instilling into men's minds of old as now,
 Man's richest heritage, and, so, providing
 'Gainst mortal things, that must and ought to be,
 Thou, who dost all things rightly, all are best,
 Joy, sorrow, suffering, power, since ruled by thee,
 This heart which finally I to thee devote,
 And here, this spirit enlightened with all love
 Godwards, let cease from prayer, these lips from praise,
 Save that which life shall offer pauselessly.
 Be with me, Lord now, all-where and for aye.
 Now go I forth again, refreshed, consoled,
 Upon my time enduring pilgrimage.
 Ho, Lucifer !
 LUCIFER. I wait thee.

FESTUS.

Whither next ?

LUCIFER. As thou wilt ; apposite spots or opposite ;
It is light translateth night ; it is inspiration
Expounds experience ; it is the west explains
The east ; it is time unfolds eternity.

FESTUS. Enough. It is time then that I homewards tend.

LUCIFER. Wherever, be it together.

GUARDIAN ANGEL.

Spirit, hear ;

How kind is God who one good deed rewards
By will, or opportunity, or means
To do another. Shall I name an act
Of mine good ? Nay, say only such to such
Were preferable. This man, my charge, by me
Invisibly watched would penitent now redeem
His life from vanity and the vile expense
Of soul on worthless objects. Learn then, he
Inspired by Him, whose essence and whose name
Is alike truth, from this time hallowed fane
Issuant, in soul resurgent, at my prayer,
With just devotion to his kind, in every land
World-pilgrim, guest of nations soon to be
Shall preach the life-ful truth, the sum of all
Terrestrial policy, universal peace
And crown of truth divine, God's onemostness.
And if with penury penitence and pain
His ghostly privileges be poised, yet God's
Whole truth he yet shall see triumphant change
The earth's benighted nations in one day,
From dead belief unquickenable, to faith
Spiritual, all active, and all life-ful faith ;
By one perpetual pauseless miracle,
He shall, the whole race calling as one soul,
Convert to peace and joy, himself with all
Bound in one bond, one golden girdle inspanned.
A world-wide ministry, which not alone
Even if a penance, works to him, a blessing,
But unlike those of old, to all beside,
In things divine, things human. But he goes
Sole ; and so single labours. Meet him, home
Reached, an thou wilt.

LUCIFER. Be it, as thou art bidden to say.

FESTUS. Thy bidding is the oracle I have sought.

XXXIX.

As in our sky sometimes a vaporous mass
 Low down, shows thunder threatening ; while by winds
 Of happier, if adverse wing fanned, high up,
 Unutterably extolled, a cloud-stream clear,
 Tinged as with ghostliest silver, spreads, opposed,
 Its shadowy waveletage, bespeaking peace
 Prospective, genial change : so here ; o'er man's
 And life's concerns, celestial influences
 Shed their serene constraint. Calmed by excess
 Of grief, by disillusion purified,
 We picture back life's simpler, earlier joys,
 Pleased ; and contrasting with the sateless greed
 Of knowledge, unbelief in love we had nigh
 Ourselves discredited, faith in innocence
 By passion spurned, self, magnified by eye
 Invert, disloyalty to law once deemed
 By us divine, it may be, all on earth
 We count false, vain ; our part is played ; to live
 We list not. Lustres more than one may lapse
 In tasks such as a world's conversion asks,
 Importunate. 'Tis the new temptation's hour.
 The last lure power is proffered ; grasped at. All
 Hangs on the last desire.

*A Library and Balcony, overhanging a River. Summer Night in
 the North.*

FESTUS, GUARDIAN ANGEL, LUCIFER.

FESTUS. The last high upward slant of sun on the trees,
 Like a dead soldier's sword upon his pall,
 Seems to console earth for the glory gone.
 Oh ! I could weep to see the day die thus :
 The deathbed of a day how beautiful.
 Linger ye clouds one moment longer there ;
 Fan it to slumber with your golden wings ;
 Like pious prayers ye seem to soothe its end.
 It will wake no more, till the all revealing day,
 When like a drop of water greatened bright
 Into a shadow, it shall show itself
 With all its little tyrannous things and deeds,
 Unhomed and clear. The day hath gone to God,
 Straight, like an infant's spirit, or a mocked
 And mourning messenger of grace to man.
 Would it had taken me too upon its wing !
 Mine end is nigh. Grant heaven, I die outright,
 And slip the coil, without waiting it unwind !
 Who, lying lonely upon a highmost hill,
 In noon's imperious silence, nought about him
 But the clear dark sky, like to God's hollowed hand
 On earth's head laid, but expects some natural spirit
 Should start out of the universal air ;
 And gathering round him all his cloudy robe,

As one in act to teach mysterious things,
 Explain that he must die? that risen as high
 As life can lift him up, as far above
 The world as flesh can mount, o'er tyrant wind,
 And clouded lightning, and the rainbow round;
 And gained a loftier, more mysterious beauty
 Of feeling, something like a starry darkness
 Seizing the soul, say he must know that now
 Having so much attained; so trodden away,
 And trampled off the elements of the world,
 Life hath more awe than death; as that to die
 That hour were best of fates, and saying, vanish,
 Who hath not at such moments felt, as now
 I feel, that to be happy we must die?
 And here I rest above the world, and its ways;
 The wind, opinion, and the rainbow, beauty,
 And the thunder, superstition. I am free
 Of all: save death, what want I to be happy?
 Hell solves all doubts. Come to me, spirit of evil!

LUCIFER. Lo! I am here; and ever prompt when called.
 Death's such a favourite now at court, it seems,
 He hath but to ask and have. Him teaze not yet,
 Or, freesome, he may take thee at thy word.
 I do not suppose in truth thou art happier now,
 In toiling for all others, than as once
 But for thyself.

FESTUS. It may be not, but now
 Those others are mine other self.

LUCIFER. But come.
 How speed thy general pleasures?

FESTUS. Bravely. Joys
 Are bubble-like; what makes them, bursts them, too.
 And like the milky way, there, dim with stars,
 The soul which numbers most, will shine the less.

LUCIFER. No matter; mind it not. That joys of earth
 Should turn to ruin of spirits is somewhat hard.
 What are these, love, hilarity, vanity,
 These secondary orblets of man's life,
 And satellites of youth's all glowing sphere,
 But natural luxuries, few indeed can shun?
 They have well nigh unimmortalized myself.

FESTUS. Yet have they nought, base, impure, ruinous
 Heart-harlots, wherewithal to sate the spirit
 Which doth enamour immortality.
 It may be, as to love, the feeling still
 Is adamantine though the splendid thing
 Whereon it writes its record, is of all
 Frailest; and though earth, lovely mother, shows
 To all the same blind kindness, beautiful
 To see, she loves her children with, to me
 Her beauty she in vain unbosometh.
 It lists me not to live; for things may be

Corrupted into beauty ; and even love,
Where all the passions blend, as hues in white,
Tires at the last as day would, if all day,
And no night. It may be, forgive me, God !
I am getting too forlorn to live, too waste ;
Aught that I can, or do love, shoots by me,
Like a train upon an iron road. And yet
I need not now reproach mine arm nor aim.
For I have winged each pleasure as it flew,
How swift or high soever in its flight.
We cannot live alone. The heart must have
A prop without, or it will fall and break.
But nature's common joys are common cheats.
As he who sails southwards, beholds, each night,
New constellations rise, all clear, and fair ;
So, o'er the waters of the world, as we
Reach the mid zone of life, or go beyond,
Beauty and bounty still beset our course ;
New beauties wait upon us everywhere ;
New lights enlighten, and new worlds attract.
But I have seen and I have done with all.
Friendship hath passed me like a ship at sea ;
And I have seen no more of it. A friend
I had with whom, in youthhood, I was wont
To learn, think, laugh, weep, strive, and love, together ;
For we were always rivals in all things ;
Together up high springy hills, to trace
A runnel to its birthplace—to pursue
A river—to search, haunt old ruined towers,
And muse in them—to scale the cloud-clad hills,
While thunders murmured in our very ear ;
To leap the lair of the live cataract,
And pray its foaming pardon for the insult ;
To dare the broken tree-bridge across the stream ;
To crouch behind the broad white waterfall,
Tongue of the glen, like to a hidden thought—
Dazzled, and deafened, yet the more delighted ;
To reach the rock which makes the fall and pool ;
There to feel safe or not to care if not ;
To fling the free foot over our native hills,
Which seemed to breathe the bracing breeze we loved
The more it lifted up our loosened locks,
That nought might be between us and the heavens ;
Or, hand in hand, leap, laughing, with closed eyes,
In Trent's death-loving deeps ; yet was he kind
Ever to us ; and bare us buoyant up,
And followed our young strokes, and cheered us on—
As quick we dashed, in reckless rivalry,
To reach, perchance, some long green floating flag—
Just when the sun's hot lip first touched the stream,
Reddening to be so kissed ; and we rejoiced,
As breasting it on we went over depth and death,

Strong in the naked strife of elements,
Toying with danger in as little fear
As with a maiden's ringlets. And oft, at night
Bewildered and bewitched by favourite stars,
We would breathe ourselves amid unfooted snows ;
For there is poetry where aught is pure ;
Or over the still dark heath, leap along, like harts,
Through the broad moonlight ; for we felt where'er
We leapt the golden gorse, or lowly ling,
We could not be from home.—That friend is gone,
There's the whole universe before our souls.
Where shall we meet next ? Shall we meet again ?
Oh ! might it be in some far happy world,
That I may light upon his lonely soul,
Hard by some broad blue stream, where high the hills,
Wood-bearded, sweep to its brink—musing, as wont,
With love-like sadness, upon sacred things ;
For much in youth we loved and mused on them.
To say what ought to be to human wills,
And measure morals sternly ; to explore
The bearings of men's duties and desires ;
To note the nature and the laws of mind ;
To balance good with evil ; and compare
The nature and necessity of each ;
To long to see the ends and end of things ;
Or if no end there be, the endless, then,
As suns look into space ; these were our joys—
Our hopes—our meditations—our attempts.
One thing he missed 'twas faith in man ; he loved
Knowledge to please and greaten himself, not men.
Yes, he is gone, and what remains but woe ?
And if I have enjoyed more love than others,
Love's but superior suffering, and is more
Than balanced by the loss of one we love.
And love, itself, hath passed. One fond fair girl
Remains, who loves me still. But is it love
I feel ? or but pure kindness ? Let fate prove.
How shall I find another like my last ?
Even as I had for her relinquished all,
Herself, that more than all, to me was lost ;
And Death cast down the tower of my intent.
Though thou and he o'erthrew, yet heaven, I know,
Her soul received ; and the Eternal beauty
Embayed within its arms the mortal fair.
The golden and the gorgeous loveliness,
A sunset beauty ! Ah ! I saw it set.
My heart, alas ! set with it. I have drained
Life of all love, as doth an iron rod
The heavens of lightning ; I have done with it ;
And all its waking woes, and dreamed-of joys,
No more shall beauty star the air I live in ;
And no more will I wake at dead of night,

And hearken to the roaring of the wind:
 As though it came to carry one away—
 Claiming for sin. Fear lost, I am lost for ever.
 To earn the world's delights by equal sins,
 Seems the great aim of life—the aim succeeds.
 Here it is madness, and perdition there.
 And but for thee I might have now been happy!

LUCIFER. Why charge, why wrong me thus? When first I knew thee,

I deemed it thine ambition to be damned.
 Thine every thought, almost, had gone from good,
 As far as finite is from infinite;
 And then thou wast as near to me as now.
 Thou hadst declined in worship, and in wish
 To please thy God; nor wouldst thou e'er repent.
 What more need I, to justify attempt?
 Have I shrunk back from granting aught I promised?
 Thy love of knowledge—is that satisfied?

FESTUS. It is. Yet knowledge is a doubtful boon—
 Root of all good, and fruit of all that's bad.
 I have talked with elements, here unknown, of worlds;
 Learned the majestic language of the sons
 Of light, and heaven's angelic kin; and taught
 By spheres impetuous hearted, mountain maned,
 And wisest stars which speak themselves in signs
 Too sacred to be explicable here,
 The bright articulations of their spheres,
 Have summed the mysteries of all worlds with earth's,
 And found in all one same and master truth.
 And now what better am I? Nearer God?
 When the void finds a voice, mine answer know.

LUCIFER. What better or what worse thou canst not tell.
 For good and evil, wherein differ they?
 Accrue not both from the same parent force,
 As ripeness and decay? Light, light alone,
 Of hues how contrary soe'er is cause
 Common and one.

FESTUS. Distracter of God's truth!
 Shall not God's word, all separative, suffice?

LUCIFER. Thou canst not have lacked joys.

FESTUS. We seek them oft
 Among our own delusions, follies, pains;
 Joys half accursed my soul hath writhed 'mong oft,
 Like to some day-lived creature in the heart
 Of a rose, to him death odorous from excess.

LUCIFER. Hath not care perished from thy heart, as, flung
 From the apostle's hand, the viper?

FESTUS. Just like that:
 All care shall cease in fire.

LUCIFER. Infatuate, cease.

FESTUS. Were act mind's mate, man had a firm hold now
 On the immortal future; but we turn

From either skiey end, star-garlanded,
 Teeming with light, and from the spirit truths
 Which crown all thought, to gauds and lures of life
 All formed, and beauty's eyes inspired with tears,
 Or fired with mirth conclusive ; and so lose
 Count of those heavenly spheres we meant at first
 To reckon unto the last atomic light.
 But how shall these, the joys and cares of earth,
 And life's vain schemes, appear to the great soul,
 Which hath no friend, no equal save the world,
 When all these constellated systems known
 To the keen ken of science, space's depths,
 And the whole mighty heavens that bind our reach,
 Hang like a pale speck doubtful to the eye,
 In unimagined distance ? Is it thus
 Ordered of God lest man's weak powers should fail,
 And the round wall of madness pound us in ?
 Eternity ! thou holdest in thine own hand
 The casket of all secrets, death the key.
 And now what seem I even unto myself ?
 Life's impulse ceased, we live on being's rebound ;
 As some vain wind, which having wasted life
 In rounding mountains and their shadowy woods
 Made lyrelike vocal, dies at last at sea
 The sun sole witness, where deep-brooding spreads
 The uttermost circumference of a calm ;
 So the soul struggling through life's death-clouds, ends
 In the serene eternal.

LUCIFER. It may be,
 No life is waste in the great worker's hand :
 The gem too poor to polish in itself,
 We grind to brighten others. Courage, friend !
 Hast thou not had thine every quest ?

FESTUS. Save one.

LUCIFER. Why not then rest at last, and life enjoy ?

FESTUS. How can I rest while aught remains not tried ?

LUCIFER. Not tried ? I proffer now the power thou long'st for.

FESTUS. I have beheld my name writ in the book
 Of life eterne ; wherefore then tempt'st thou me ?

What were a seat among the sons of kings
 To him whose seat is with the sons of God ?

LUCIFER. Fate's scheme must be fulfilled. Salvation, though
 Promised, is not achieved ; and if achieved,
 Is still not life accomplished. Never known
 To being create may fate's most holy law,
 Till the day dawn of all fulfilments, be.

FESTUS. When God once speaks, his word for ever stands.
 Still let me well consider.

LUCIFER. Justly weigh
 All things. I have need to ponder even as thou.
 Say he casts back mine offer. Still is due,
 By thought or deed, the unknottng of the tale,

Some day. Accepts? Still well; the peace he harps on,
 Be his, though not for long would earth's endure,
 Without; and for within, I'll look to that.
 Meanwhile, as on some stern and strife-ful day,
 An age smote hot into an hour, that sends
 Kings crownless begging, or an empire hurls
 To popular deperdition, and its lord,
 Rude dominator of nations, to his doom,
 Comes night with limpening dews; and drives the crowd
 Home, self-distraught with pale and panic fears,
 Lest law lift up her ghastly head as stunned,
 Not slain, or power imperial drown the roar
 Of brute success, with muffled tramp of troops,
 Stealthy, retributive; so be it mine, time due,
 To enfeeble his spirit's triumphant temperament
 With nature's sick forebodings, vain and vague
 And vacillating emotions, which undo
 All reason hath yet pronounced most stable. Come!
 Since last we met, thou hast well nigh, land by land,
 O'er tramped the earth, alone, in dole, and pain;
 We horsed it once for pleasure; and of pride
 And passion expiative, hast humbly oathed
 All nations in one common bond of peace
 Till the world's wisest seers, elect of men,
 In hidden and holy conclave meet to choose
 Some sovereign soul to rule the race; all war
 Quelled by unanimous thought; all want, all woe,
 From every clime evict (war, war begets),
 A noble aim world wide, thou wouldst not miss.

FESTUS. I would not, truly. From mine earliest youth
 Since I was conscious of myself, mine aims
 Heaven's everlasting truths to actualize
 In Being's passing hour, that mark I have held
 Constant in view; and even if once obscured
 By one huge wave of passion intervened
 Between my life's tossed barque and guiding light,
 I pay the fine for failure justice bids
 So would not I, who from idolatrous rites
 Unblessed beliefs, and spells forbidden escaped,
 By penance just, self earned, avoid to see
 How little in truth of rational love would make
 All earth's beliefs imblended in one pure creed;
 All semi-animate faiths one vital truth,
 Which shall outlive the globe, and reconcile
 Creeds contrary by refining all; with plans
 By him framed we of old both knew, and whom
 I in my earnest youth most loved, devised,
 And partly and in secret set afoot;
 Whose bright soul, glorious, may be, in yon spheres,
 Surveys pre-eminent the success of schemes
 Earth's good was compassed by.

LUCIFER.

And some deserts

He loved to assure to others, say, a friend
 But more than thou, or any of his, have reaped.
 These, the world's burden, human history's end,
 Bound yet to be accomplished, as he held,
 Not then nor since thou hast dreamed of consciously,
 As thine ?

FESTUS. As only his whom God designed.

LUCIFER. How ignorance may comport with wisdom, see
 But life is not a failure wholly, sure,
 Let us sum up thine earlier aims and quests.
 Say but the word, and thou shalt press a throne
 But less than mine, scarce less than heaven's ; before
 Whose feet earth's puny potentates may sue
 For choice of slavedoms, and be all satisfied.

FESTUS. The paltry pittance of a world like this
 Were not a bribe for me, nor all its crowns
 Crushed into one tiara, but that thus,
 By supersession of all earthly sway,
 Autocrasie divine were mine ; and man,
 Knowing the power of truth and faith, might see
 Fate, highest of all laws, and recognize
 In mine direct complicity with heaven :
 My will, my fate, God's fate.

LUCIFER. So let it be.

FESTUS. I have had enough of the infinities :
 I am moderate now. I will have the throne of earth.

LUCIFER. Thou shalt. Yet mind !—with that the world must
 end.

FESTUS. I can survive.

LUCIFER. Nay, die with it must thou.

FESTUS. Why should I die ? I am egg-full of life :
 Earth's in her first young crescent quarter, yet.
 I dare not, cannot credit it shall die.
 I will not have it, then.

LUCIFER. It matters not ;
 I know thou never wilt have ease at heart,
 Until thou hast thy soul's whole, full desire ;
 Whenever that may happen, all is done.
 Once again therefore search the scroll of life ;
 Mark what is done, what undone. Lo ! in love,
 Already twice hath judgment passed upon thee.
 Say hath not evil wrought its own revenge,
 And death the only guerdon thou hast gained ?
 Let then mere self-life cease. The heart's career
 Is ended. With the world thy part is now.
 The depths of feeling, passion, pleasure, woe,
 The mysteries and dread delights of spirit,
 All, thou hast sounded. Now behoves to live
 The worldlife of the future—last the same
 One instant or for ever. Bury love.

The steedlike world stands ready. Mount for life.

FESTUS. Well, then—be it now ! I live but for myself.

The whole world but for me. Friends, loves, and all
 I sought, abandon me. It is time to die.
 I am yet young; yet have I been deserted,
 And wronged, by those whom most I have loved and served.
 Sun, moon, and stars! may they all fall on me,
 When next I trust another—man or woman.
 Earth rivals hell too often, at the best.
 All hearts are stronger for the being hollow.
 And that was why mine was no match for theirs.
 The pith is out of it now.—Lord of the world—
 It will not directly perish?

LUCIFER. Not perhaps.

Thou wilt have all fame, while thou livest, now.

FESTUS. I care not; fame is folly: for it is, sure,
 Far more to be well known of God than man.
 With all my sins I think I feel I am God's.

LUCIFER. Farewell, then, for a time.

FESTUS. I am alone.

Alone? He clings around me like the clouds
 Upon a hill. When will the clouds roll off?
 When will sun visit me? O thou great God!
 In whose right hand the elements are atoms;
 In whose eye, light and darkness but a wink;
 Who, in thine anger, like a blast of cold,
 Dost make the mountains shake like chattering teeth;
 Have mercy! pity me! for it is thou
 Who hast fixed me to this test. Wilt thou not save?
 Forgive me, Father! but I long to die;
 I long to live to thee, a pure, free mind.
 Take again, God! and thou, fair earth, the form
 And spirit which, at first, ye lent to me.
 Such as they were, I have used them. Let them part.
 I weary of this world; and like the dove,
 Urged o'er life's barren flood, sweep, tired, back
 To thee who sent'st me forth. Bear with me, God!
 I am not worthy of thy wrath, nor love!
 Oh! that the things which have been were not now
 In memory's resurrection! But the past
 Bears in her arms the present and the future:
 And what can perish while perdition is?
 From the hot, angry, crowding courts of doubt
 Within the breast, it is sweet to escape, and soothe
 The soul in looking upon natural beauty.
 Oh! earth, like man her son, is half divine.
 There is not a leaf within this quiet spot,
 But which I seem to know; should miss, if gone.
 I could run over its features, hour by hour,
 The quaintly figured beds—the various flowers—
 The mazy paths all cunningly converged—
 The black yew hedge, like a beleaguering host,
 Round some fair garden province—here and there,
 The cloudlike laurel clumps sleep, soft and fast,

Pillowed by their own shadows—and beyond,
The ripe and ruddy fruitage—the sharp fir's
Fringe, like an eyelash, on the faint blue west—
The grey old church, its age-peeled pinnacles,
And tufted top, whence, now, the white owl wheels ;
The oaks, which spread their broad arms in the blast,
And bid storms come, and welcome ; there they stand
To whom a summer passes like a smile :
And the proud peacock towers himself there, and screams,
Ruffling the imperial purples of his neck ;
O'er all, the shadowy groves which crest the hills,
And with descending clouds equality claim
Of gloom ; whisper with winds nought else knows nigh,
And bow to angels as they wing by them ;
The lonely, bowery, woodland view before—
And, making all more beautiful, thou, sweet moon,
Leading slow pomp, as triumphing o'er heaven !
High riding in thy loveless, deathless brightness,
And in thy cold, unconquerable beauty,
As though there were nothing worthy in the world
Even to lie below thee, face to God.
And Night, in her own name, and God's again,
Hath dipped the earth in dew ;—and there she lies,
Even like a heart all trembling with delight,
Till passion murder power to speak—so mute.
Young maiden moon ! just looming into light—
I would that aspect never might be changed ;
Nor that fine form, so spirit-like, be spoiled
With fuller light. Oh ! keep that brilliant shape,
Keep the delicious honour of thy youth,
Sweet sister of the sun, more beauteous thou
Than he sublime. Shine on, nor dread decay.
It may take meaner things : but thy bright look,
Smiling away an immortality,
Assures it us—nay, it seems, half, to give.
Earth may de cease. God will not part with thee,
Fair ark of light, and every blessedness !
Yes, earth, this earth, may foul the face of life,
Like some swart mole on beauty's breast—or dead
Stiff, mangled reptile some clear well—while thou,
Like to a diamond on a dead man's hand,
Shalt shine, aye brilliant, on creation's corse ;
Whence God shall pluck thee to his breast, or bid
Beam 'mid his lightning locks. What are earth's joys
To watching thee, tending thy bright flock over
Yon fields celestial ? Mother, and maid of light !
That, like a god, redeems the world to heaven—
Making us one with thee, and with the sun,
And with the stars in glory—lovely moon !
I am immortal as thyself ; and we
Shall look upon each other yet in heaven
Often—but never, never more on earth.

Am I to die so soon? This death!—the thought
Comes on my heart as through a burning glass.
I cannot bend mine eyes to earth, but thence
It riseth, spectrelike, to mock—nor towards
The west, where sunset is, whose long bright pomp
Makes men in love with change—but there it lowers
Eve's last still lingering, darkening cloud; and on
The escutcheon of the morn, it is there—it is there!
But fears will steal upon the bravest mind,
Like the white moon upon the crimson west.
I have attractions for all miseries:
And every course of thought, within my heart
Leaves a new layer of woe. But it must end.
It will all be one, hereafter. Let it be;
My bosom, like the grave, holds all quenched passions.
It is not that I have not found what I sought—
But, that the world—tush! I shall see it die.
I hate, and shall outlive the hypocrite.
Stealthily, slowly, like the polar sun,
Who peeps by fits above the air-walled world—
The heavenly fief he knows and feels his own,
My heart o'erlooks the paradise of life
Which it hath lost, in cold, reluctant joy.
I live and see all beauteous things about me,
But feel no nature prompting from within
To meet and profit by them. I am like
That fabled forest of the Alp Pennine,
Which leafless lives; whereto the spring's bright showers,
Summer's heat breathless, autumn's fruitful juice,
Nothing avail;—nor winter's killing cold.
Yet have I done, said, thought, in time now passed,
What, rather than remember, I would die.
Or do again. It is the thinking on't,
And the repentance, maddens. I have thought
Upon such things so long and grievously,
My lips have grown like to a cliff-chafed sea,
Pale with a tidal passion: and my soul,
Once high and bright and self-sustained as heaven,
Unsettled now for life or death, feels like
The gray gull balanced on her bowlike wings,
Between two black waves seeking where to dive.
Long we live thinking nothing of our fate;
For in the morn of life we mark it not—
It falls behind: but as our day goes down
We catch it lengthening with a giant's stride,
And ushering us unto the feet of night.
Dark thoughts, like spots upon the sun, revolve
In troops for days together round my soul,
Disfiguring and dimming. Death! O death!
The past, the present, and the future, like
The dog three-headed, by the gates of woe
Sitting, seem ready to devour me each.

I dare not look on them. I dare not think.
The very best deeds I have ever done
Seem worthy reprobation, have to be
Repented of. But have I done aught good?
Oh that my soul were calmer! Grant me, God!
Thy peace; that added, I can smile and die.
Thy spirit only is reality:

All things beside are folly, falsehood, shame.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Elect of spirits, of sinners God forgiven,
Soul of my watching, not in all things thou
Hast pleased God, nor responded to my care;
But lone and comfortless nor I, nor heaven
Would have thee.

FESTUS. Well I know I both have grieved,
But not thou knowest all things. 'Tween my soul
And God are secrets not consigned to thee.
Until I have assurance from his word,
Which maybe I shall never have in life,
I dare not deem me safe, nor sealed in bliss.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. More, then, than this beseems me not to say,
One lives who loves thee still, by thee estranged.
Give pure fidelity due meed.

FESTUS. Her soul
Walks but with God.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Nay, she forgets not thee.
But as when by morning moonlight, while round dews
Bead still the impleached paths, some thoughtful nun,
Whose very life would wither 'neath a name
Of secular cast, culls, with cold paly hand,
Buds delicatest, that these the shrine may deck
Of patron saint who hallows from his niche
The bosky pleasance, and at his marble feet
Breathe forth their premier odours; bent to joy
The just on high, she guileless thinks, with gifts
Of earth least gross, most savouring innocence;
And posing reverently the offering, lo!
She kneels! Heaven's hosts thrill still; and while heard
The heart-breathed prayer, transcending reason, in doubt,
God's watchful eye watch. He, saint, votary, shrine,
Oblation marks: and, all seen, each in kind
Pure, not reproves; but, pleased with patiently,
Smiles, inostensive:—so, this soul who yields
Her life-flower to memorial love, and lives
Elsewise in active virtue, known to heaven
May, though beclouded seemingly, abide
In secret sunshine all her days, and bear
A strengthening weight of blessing, not alone
For herself, but others, hope.

FESTUS. I hope. Thy words
Too kind are to deceive. Yet still I would
I knew my destiny. I may hope, not love.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. But love's more mild reflection, such as that

Tempered with love divine was always hers,
 She feels, thy saintly Clara, and with thee
 Fate sharing, such as life hath still to give,
 Might yet communicate. This is the love
 The heavens approve ; this sole.

FESTUS. I doubt it not.
 We may be reconciled ;—united, never.
 The end we aim at, her more sensitive soul,
 Filled with the love of lowliest loneliness,
 Will suit not, I foresee.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. To her thou owest
 Essayed reunion ; and if there it end,
 Her pure thought will thine own refine ; perchance,
 May sanctify the sacrifice both make.

FESTUS. Thou sayst what ought to be. Be it mine to make
 Meet reparation.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Prosper.

FESTUS. Thanks !

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Farewell.

XL.

First love recalled
 Not yet reanimate, joy and grief disguised
 Each as the other, neither gains, perplexed,
 His way. Even they who play round wisdom's knee
 Miss sometimes worthiest ends. Knowing no mean,
 Ambition's high demands too close encroach
 On nature's pious privileges. Not less
 True tenderness rejoices to conceive
 The happy evangel, world-vast, of God's love ;
 His alliance with all life create and how
 Heaven's mercy ends sin's mystery, as made clear
 To the great gathering of the spheres, round God
 Convoked ; and thanks with holiest warnings blends.
 O grace forgiving, how in heaven divine,
 How sweet on earth love reconciled ; how dear
 Virtue in both ; though trode down or ignored,
 Still precious, goldlike, as in southern isle,
 Vastest of isles, to Asian continent
 Rich counterpoise, o'er mount and vale and plain
 Tribes senseless, salvage, tramped the o'ertreasured earth
 For ages, nor its charm, nor value knew.

Colonnade and Lawn.

FESTUS and CLARA.

FESTUS. Henceforth this spot be sacred ; here, where first
 I shrined thee, flower of beauty, in my heart.
 None holier to the tribes of earth ; not thou,
 Divine Elborz, now cold and crowned with snow,
 Since rested on thy brow the ark ; but once
 Peak paradisaal whereupon God's sons

Of saintliest lineage helped the harps of heaven,
 And joined each eve, ere rest, the angelic hymn :—
 Earth's first communion with the immortal blessed.
 Not holier thou, though meanest mound on earth,
 Nigh Moslem city of the moon, where, first,
 After long severance for their death-fraught sin,
 And world wide wanderings lonely, from afar,
 Our great original mother him espied,
 Tall as the crownèd palm, though bowed with woe,
 Whom her soul clave to; one whole age had passed;
 Nought more divine than demons had she seen,
 More human than the ape; when her hot tears,
 And his repentant groans drew down from heaven
 Permission for their dear reunion there;
 The mount of recognition; hallowed, thence,
 To after ages, by that blessed embrace,
 Obliterative of woe. Come, come; oh come!
 Of heaven forenamed, of me from first foreblessed.
 As in arctic climes Spring, wandering through the air,
 His long lost consort earth, all frozen at heart
 Finds 'tranced 'neath wicked winter's deathly spell,
 Stretched corselike; he full soon by gentle embrace,
 Warm breath, and sedulous skill calls back to life
 His star-browed bride; she wakes; her stiffened limbs
 Requickening, stirs; casts off the sheeted snows;
 Trees, jocund with the loosening life-sap, freed
 Through all their veinlets, don their greenery; birds
 Their voice refound, in song each other greet;
 And, like some hoary grandsire's wrinkled front,
 Ridgy with life-long cares, touched suddenly
 By infant's playful finger—ocean's face,
 Dimpled by gambolling gust, lights up, and breaks
 Into a running smile, and laughs for leagues;—
 Heaven and all-pitying nature o'er the glad
 Reunion weep their joy; so, found by me,
 Sweet solace of my soul, I long to make
 To thee atonement. Reconciled to thee,
 All parenthetic passions sacrificed,
 The world shall slip off easy from our hands,
 And we not miss her. Long! how long I wait!

I wait for thee, even as the weary west
 Waits for the evening star,
 With whom the eternal promises of rest
 And glory are.
 I wait, as waits a storm-cloud in the sky,
 The bow divine of peace,
 Which bids the thunders and the lightnings lie
 Down, and fear cease.
 I long to meet thee, as earth longs to view
 Icebound, spring's golden flowers;
 Thy beauty soothes my spirit, as the dew
 Day's burning hours.

As heaven's own light upon some sainted shrine
 Where mouldering relics be,
 Thou shinest in upon this heart of mine,
 Sacred to thee.
 And as a line erased some trace still bears
 Of words therein first writ,
 Which neither pen can hide, nor penitent tears
 As 'twas refit;
 It matters not what other powers around
 Here graved their conquering name;
 Below all depth thy love will still be found
 Truth's secret fame.

Known to ourselves, we only share with heaven
 The secret yet by me ineffable.

Lo! now I see thee coming, come, at last.

CLARA. At thy desire I come, though hard to me,
 We have lived separate lives, unlike, unsought
 Each by the other. Wherefore meet we now?

FESTUS. Thee seeking in thy sacred solitude,
 I told thee I had somewhat to impart,
 Somewhat to ask; if asking were not vain,
 Which springs despondingly from dubious heart.

CLARA. Time was it was not thus. But others came
 Whose tyrant beauty and more soaring souls
 Thee dazzled, me eclipsed. Already years
 Have passed since first we were, what now we are,
 Strangers.

FESTUS. I do confess to my reproach
 A friend too well forgotten, and thine image
 By time's colleaguèd forces with the world's,
 Effaced half from this monumental breast;
 And as the effigy of a saint, insculpt
 On alabastrine tomb some unroofed shrine,
 Faithless fiduciary, hath bared to moon
 And winds star-iced, wastes plenteously away,
 Thinned pitifully by the upper elements;
 Compassionate woods their leafy tresses strew
 Winterly, o'er it perishing, and bemoan
 In gusty suspiration; so of thee,
 My thought memorial, while impaired, had joined
 Well nigh for aye life's lengthening dusk; and now,
 Let but the passed be buried, where it lies
 In mine awed memory hidden, like to a blade
 Gore rusted, in its sheath, no more to flash
 In the grey air upon the eyes of men,
 And all the future is our own. One's own
 Resistless weakness 'tis which overcomes,
 More than another's strength. Oh! I confess,
 Oft hath this heart allured by glittering rites
 And sacred titles, and celestial names,
 Offered at others' altars, and decreed
 Wildly, profanely, negligence of thine.

True, I have worshipped idols and forsworn
 The loving faith I owed to thee alone ;
 Canst thou forgive ? reconsecrate the heart,
 Rededicate the temple ? Do not all
 Beliefs how far soever from God's truth,
Circle around the same in mode prescribed,
 As round heaven's secret and all-central sun,
 The constellated skies ? And shall then love
 Lack like justification, or in vain
 Plead the necessity of liberty ?—
 For truly I was destined for this end,
 And in myself believed the most at first.
 For mortal knowledge, which is error, dies,
 And spiritual truth alone outlasts
 All nature ; love insensibly with heaven
 Here blending, thither wending, thence derived.

CLARA. Wert thou as I such need had never been
 But we had lived serene and sinless here,
 Aimless, save loving God and bettering man.
 Nay, let it be so still, with thee, I pray.
 As in a round wide view from some tall hill,
 Central and isolate, it happeneth oft,
 The furthest things on all sides eyeable
 Are village temples tapering to the skies,
 Be such, too, the horizon of the soul ;
 And every ultimate object, unto heaven
 Calmly aspiring, indicate its end,
 And sanctify the limits of our life.
 For as in gentlest exhalations earth
 Breathes forth the glistening steams which, high in air,
 Glow, sunlipped, into clouds of rosy gold,
 Or seek again her breast in fruitful dew ;
 So of our aspirations and desires,
 Might we endow life's skiey calm, they all
 Made retributive blessings, and a clime
 Of love create about us bright and boon ;
 An everlasting spring of holy good,
 And venerable beauty. But, alas !
 Men breathe forth passions which fall back in blights,
 And stormy desolations, that defile
 The sky-born streams, and flood life's fields with woe.

FESTUS. The evil in our nature we can act
 Always and utter ; but the inner good
 Hath inexpressive boundlessness. Earthlike,
 Each carries with him his own atmosphere,
 Or pure or foul, where'er we orbitate.
 Who knows himself in spirit, all things knows ;
 As in nature even the atom and the all
 Commune and know each other ; and as the slant
 Invisible axis of the earth too fine
 For fairy to find footing tiptoe, bears
 All superincumbent continents and seas,

Mountains and air realms. Knowing thus, that once,
 My own heart like a wizard's magic book,
 Studded with spells despotic to call up
 Sprite, spectre, and familiar fiend, must needs
 Assoiled be from every fiery sign
 And fateful cipher, ere made safe for aye ;
 Thee as a priestess pure of old seek I,
 That thou mightst hold to me the holy branch,
 Dipped in soul-cleansing wave, the branch of peace :
 That peace thou lovest so well and both desire ;
 And from thee ask absolvment of passed sin.
 For as when the sun's light in some high-domed fane
 On golden altar gleaming finds itself
 In face of something holier, more divine ;
 So, on thy sacred soul heaven's truths, confirmed,
 Beam in subservient blessings.

CLARA.

If thou meanest

That thou dost hope forgiveness, it is given ;
 Thine hath it been ere asked for ; always thine.

FESTUS. Bright soul, be blessèd. Take again thy name
 Unto thee ; sign of reunited love.

CLARA. Name which because it hath lingered on thy lips,
 In love's pure tones full oft, always to me
 Is sacred. None shall name me so but thou,
 Thou only. When thou changest, that shall change.

FESTUS. Breathe not to me of change. Albeit I lived
 On earth till, like some desert builded fane,
 She ceased, though based on astral laws, from sight,
 Wasted by winds, worn down by elements,
 Smoothed level under time's insatiate sand ;
 Invisible even to treasure-seeker's sight ;
 Oh I should change no more. Henceforth to me,
 Be thou, thou art, the type of holiest things ;
 Pure symbol and fulfilment of all good
 Compass and aspiration perfected ;
 Truth's promises and fulfilments interlocked ;
 Bound in one saintly volume love-illumed :
 A book of benedictions, sealed to me ;
 A final, spiritual covenant ; and a new
 Alliance, hallowed both for earth and heaven.
 This fallible heart, enchanted long, distraught
 By charms of luxury, sense, art, knowledge, now
 To truth's allegiance, and to thine returns.

CLARA. 'Twas not for life's mere pleasures, not for power
 Prospective ; nor wide knowledge of men's ways,
 Their wants, their needs, their wrongs, and remedies,
 I loved thee from the first ; but for thyself ;
 And for that royal touch of sympathy,
 Which heals so much of the world's ill, with man,
 And now I may not these ; I dare not have.
 As some great glacier, from its icy breast
 Expelling aught of baser nature, seeks

By this self-chastening means to purify
 Its visible essence, so, all soul sincere,
 Must, of its high and bright vitality,
 Reject, in silent scorn, those worldly taints,
 And aims extraneous, which itself debar
 From inmost commune, and most high, with heaven.
 Why then thy spirit degrade with greed of power,
 Thankless, unblessed, as I have heard? To me
 This were forbiddance. Aught that clogs the soul,
 Or clouds its aspirations, I abhor.
 Be it not therefore that though one in heart,
 We are in spirit twain.

FESTUS. Nay, speak not thus.
 All nature is forebodeful; winds and streams
 And cloud shapes, which in heaven's inverted bowl
 Forecast our future. The presage of some vast
 And world-wide revolution nigh at hand
 In a sonorous whisper rounds earth's dome.

CLARA. True; I have heard it. Would it were untrue!
 Hearts may be sad at parting, but at meeting,
 They should spring light as birds upon the spray.

FESTUS. Thy thoughts, as stars the sea, light up my mind;
 Heaven's son am I, and am by Heaven made free
 Of all low laws and lesser fealties;
 Whence, in this age, when men of crooked mind
 Or feeble, who fail the glorious Cause of things,
 Or reason of their existence, to perceive
 Stamped through Nature's mass perlamineate,
 Self-destined to misprision of life's ends
 Bid us misrate with them the whole as ill.
 To these let good or ill hap as they may
 But say not fate doth not fulfil itself,
 Adumbrate from the first; less shadowy now;
 The lowlier into loftier, changing aye.
 What if my cause before men show askant,
 Yet is it straight as light in the eye of Heaven.
 To God I am no mystery. Well He knows
 All motives; and my objects I avow
 Each night to Him, who each morn sanctions them.

CLARA. For all this, I foresee the end in woe;
 Woe utter, woe inevitable: not yet,
 Like oriented, may be, to one same point.
 Friends, worthiest fellow helps of Heaven, desire.

FESTUS. True to my purpose, what if I be false
 To others and their objects, mine being good
 I hold it great and holy, and to Fate,
 Commit their reconciliation, and to thee.
 Thy longing is I know for simplest peace;
 Mine, too; nor wouldst thou, peace apart, care even
 With me to share earth's throne.

CLARA. The only throne
 I hope for is one nor policy, nor power

Can found ; nor war o'erthrow, nor popular rage ;
 Nor blood be foul ; nor treachery undermine ;
 Nor pride succeed to, or thrust off ; a throne
 Where dear humility may both set and see
 All higher worthier than herself.

FESTUS.

Be it thus ;

I am at peace with all men, save myself ;
 Even now ; my rule safe warranted by fate.

CLARA. Thousands of enemies must be thine even now.

No mortal's safe from foes ; the envious eye
 Grudges all gifts ; nor is the tyrant free
 Though kindest-faced, from dread, which no exempt
 Knows, nor distinction. If he does not fear,
 He hates ; and if he does not hate, he scorns ;
 And scorn and hate and fear are all, with him,
 And alike, deadly : he therefore insecure :
 For man by man each slays him in his mind.

FESTUS. Who said I'd be a tyrant, or that gifts
 From God's great love wrought evil ?

CLARA.

Power unchecked,

To nought on earth amenable, that way tends.
 But this is not the future I, in heart
 Have dared so long to dream of. Even although
 Thy will should vaunt full dominance o'er the earth,
 To me it brings scant pleasure. I had hoped
 New love to welcome like the morning air,
 Which wakes the buds in roseland ; and that still,
 If, like twin hands around the face of life,
 Thou hadst a wider scope and bolder course,
 Our act and end were yet but one ; to note
 The hours, and all the years fulfil of love.
 But now since I this mighty rumour heard
 My thoughts, though many are all sad, and shaped
 In one mould, tear-like. Nay, albeit I see
 Thy triumph, I abjure it, would I might
 For thee disclaim it even as for myself.
 It is meat forbidden the fasting soul that pines
 For pure nutrition, 'tis unclean ; accursed.
 How canst thou claim world service, and enjoy
 Heaven's favour ?

FESTUS.

Both be fated mine.

CLARA.

Enough,

Choose 'tween thy destiny and me. Unite,
 As living bond, I dare not, those extremes.
 This fateful future I mistrust ; nor know
 In what wise God secured ; but shrink to share.

FESTUS. This know, though doomed thy late-recovered love
 Dearer to me than aught of earth, to lose,
 Fate I must follow. Said I not my soul
 Had taken up its birthright, and assumed
 The spirit's freedom, to accept life's boons,
 Its highest ends ensured ; and fix by choice

Its star to steer by, love or fate? itself
 Holding the imaged all, of each soul's good
 Consultant, stand world-type; and versant thus
 With absolute good, the wisely electing spirit
 Might towards its great reward progress, in peace
 O'erpassing all earth's lesser joys?

CLARA. Say on.

I would not have thy soul abase itself
 By one thought about me.

FESTUS. Nay, speak not so.

But if at the start, as now by thy word curbed,
 Should love's career be over in my heart,
 A vaster sphere expands before me. Power
 And knowledge I can give thee for thy love:
 But scarce repay in kind.

CLARA. I hear thy words.

The fragrance of life's floweret long is fled,
 Still let it linger, cherishable for passed
 And memoried sweetness, where thou laidst it, here.

FESTUS. Sweetest and dearest, kindest, best of beings,
 It is I who suffer, suffer therefore me,
 While I am with thee. The sole love, I feel,
 That might have, that hath, blessed me;—but what eye
 Can see an orb's whole circuit at one glance?
 Life's orb, alas! is on the wane; and much
 Must yet be said, much done. All things of the end
 Have premonition; and states mightiest, long
 Exhausted of all old beliefs, now seek
 New faith, which can alone regenerate;
 Nations now readily sponsors for man's right
 To every blessing earth can give, or heaven.
 The earth-flower closeth even now its leaves,
 Death's dews are falling. We are verging nigh
 On sundown of time's universal day,
 And these be of life's last vespers. It remains
 As promised by the All-granting power, to change
 The essential for the real, and to translate
 The virtual into practice. All that truth
 Mining her way through policy profound
 Secretes from masses skillless to commute
 Force into power; all that the holy bond
 Of man's most high fraternities secures
 Is mine, unthought of by the obsequious world
 Of minimous notables, adding nought to nought,
 Unfeared, unprized. One right in fine now is,
 Which supersedes all others, one and sole
 Man's regal race is loyal to the right
 Of doom divine, and the destiny God imposed.
 Who now elects a nation, now a man,
 Maybe, to work his will; and sanctify
 His end that I this moment seal, time's seal;

And closure of the canon of all kings.

CLARA. I ponder ; yet my soul its balance keeps ;
Not prizing, not approving all I hear ;
More marvelling how thou know'st of things yet due
And how the end of all things blends with thine.

FESTUS. God's thoughts are as a firmament of stars,
Fixed suns ; the heavenly truths which he inspires
Or we by nature know of Him, the all
Revealed, all hidden ; eternal show to us,
Innumerable, and vast. Man's loftiest thoughts
Even on his proper destinies as one soul ;
Or, volumed into nations ; or the race
As whole ; mind's flitting meteors which, flashed through
Life's hemisphere, illumine it (whose counterpart
Is death ; heaven ; what ?) with but decadent light,
Both for us needed, perfect each, each true ;
These temporal not the less than those eterne,
Whose union constitutes the universe.
As when some mighty Mage, not solely given
To learn life's passing secrets, but divine
From natural knowledge, how time's current hour
Bears on the eternal, 'gainst the reticent skies
Wagers his skill ; and notes how from the breast
Of tempting virgin, by her side who holds
The golden spike ; or his marital hand
Who heads the arkite triad, leap they forth,
Showerwise, bright stars ; or from his trenchant glaive
Galactic, waved to save from death the maid
With sunlets girdled ; dropped whence, many an orb.
In meteoric nights autumnal, fills,
In falling, half the firmament with light ;
And thus, from fixed and transient lights combined,
Draws astral fates, forewarning war, love, death,
Deliverance from all ill, nay, what he would ;
So I, though in lowliest wise, forebent to learn
From God's fixed laws and truths ; from Nature's acts,
Effectual, limited, and our rational thoughts,
Perforce constructive of harmonious wholes ;
Thoughts that, like Heaven's evanishing spherelets, light
Inmost, man's high brain, his destined end,
Deduce, and future of the world-wise soul ;
Which weighed, the sum I find incongruous not
With God's prime plan, but truly accomplotive ;
And fortunate ; for at man's, our native's, birth,
The star of love and peace benefic ruled ;
In mid-life, all the heavenly houses ; law,
Love, science, power, faith, health, wealth, mirth, and dearth,
Friendship and feud, he knew ; and when at last,
Failing betwixt time's trembling lights, ere yet
The towering gates of death's dark house he neared ;
And ere his eyes dimmed ; he the ascendant sun,

Nature's arch-priest, in whose wise law of love
 He had learned at length, a faithful votary,
 To walk, beheld rejoicingly approach
 His head to shrive him, and his soul release
 'Mid blessings humbly conquered, he foreknew
 His future, rich with joy; undreamed of joy,
 Orb after orb unfolding endless showed.
 So the same star which led him into life,
 His spirit restores all kind to heaven; and earth's
 Vast horoscope, with ours, is verified.

CLARA. With ours, thou saidst; say ours; one life, one death.
 The one is so much than the many more;
 Why then even twain? And why not, if like glad
 Together, each the other and the world,
 Congratulate upon destiny so divine?

FESTUS. God is a great destroyer. All must die
 And earth must be destroyed, ere aught's renewed.

CLARA. Destroyed! mysterious judgment; as when God,
 With ruinous fire from heaven hurls down the fane
 Wherein his faithful worship; or salutes
 With death this holier temple of the soul
 Sudden and swift, no times for penitence,
 Nor prayer.

FESTUS. Arraign not I God's deep decrees.
 I cannot tell thee all I know, nor dare;
 For wisdom seals the lips which wonder opens.
 The spirit's initiation dread and grave
 Into the light intelligible of truth,
 Saddens, as with joy's overleap, the soul
 It hallows and expands. But thou because
 Thou knowst so much of truth, more still shalt know,
 Faith fortifying, to thee, my parting gift
 This, than all realms more worth, till partings cease.

CLARA. What is it thou wilt tell me?

FESTUS. I have seen
 What ne'er again may be, nor e'er till now hath been.

CLARA. Where didst thou see this marvel?

FESTUS. 'Twas in space;
 He took me there, of whom I oft have told;
 And midst of all the void, and in its place
 Was God; the God all live in, not behold.
 What now to thee I tell, He told the spheres;
 For the great family of the universe
 Round Him were gathered as a fire; and we
 Held back; and, saving God, none did us see.

CLARA. Say on, love. Let me hear.

FESTUS. A sound, then, first,
 I heard as of a pent-up flood just burst;
 It was the rush of God's world-winnowing wing,
 Which bowed the orbs as flowers are bowed by breath of
 spring.
 And then a voice I heard, a voice sublime.

To which the hoarded thunders of all time
Pealing earth's death-knell shall a whisper be
Saying these words, Where will ye worship me ?
Ay, where shall be your Maker's holy place ?
The heaven of heavens is poor before his face.
How shall ye mete my temple, ye who die ?
Look ! Can ye span your God's infinity ?
Hear, mighty universe, thy Maker's voice ;
Let all thy myriad, myriad worlds rejoice ;
Lo, I your Maker do amid ye come,
To choose my worship and to name my home.
This heard each sphere : and all throughout the sky
Came crowding round. Our earth was rolling by,
When God said to it, Rest ; and fast it stood.
With voice like winds through some vast olden wood,
Thus spake the One again. Behold, O earth,
Thy parent God ; it is I who gave thee birth.
With all my love I did thee once endow,
With all my mercy ; this thou hast even now.
But hear, O orb ! corrupt by countless creeds,
One only true, to worship me (made known
To all) in love and fear. Sin first disown,
Act justly, and repent of evil deeds.
Yes, hear my words ; thou never loved'st me well,
Nor feared'st my wrath. Dread'st thou no longer hell ?
Dream'st thou that guilt shall alway mock those fires,
That deathless death which hell for aye expires ?
Oh, hear, and dread in time ; amend ; and turn
From thy misdeeds ; lest, when these spherelets burn ;
Pass ; and, like dewdrops 'neath mine angry rays,
Sunwise, this bright, broad universe doth blaze,
Blaze like the fat in sacrificial flame ;
A holocaust 'tis mine sometime to claim ;
Its scorching quenchless mass all, I should pour
Upon thy naked soul. Canst thou endure ?
He said, and as the fear fraught words flew passed,
Earth fluttered like a dead leaf in the blast,
Thou who outbrav'st God, fate so sad, so sure ?
Come not my words to pass ? Thou well dost know.
Am not I God ? thy trust ? Yet trust not thou,
Impenitent, to ward my righteous blow.
Due to eternal justice, high in heaven,
As on earth, low ; unalterably even.
Haste, cleanse thy brow, thine hand from brother-blood ;
War spilled ; from sin thy soul ; thine heart from crime ;
Me, thy sole Saviour call, while yet is time,
And live in loving, doing, being, good.
Commute all vain beliefs for one, the sole
Which me delights, and sanctifies the whole ;
Then seek again my face. No longer fear ;
Repent, and live. Sweet music in thine ear,
And peace, I speak. Seek thus to be forgiven ;

Thus loved ; and meet with joy thy God in heaven,
 Now to this universe of pride and sin,
 Pride, in themselves ; in that all creatures err,
 Self-slaved, who their mean ends to God's prefer ;
 And sin ; that sordid souls who Heaven would gain
 At once, say, failing, God makes all in vain ;
 Speak I, ere yet I call mine angels in.
 Draw nigh, ye worlds. These timidly, more near
 Yet distantly approaching, pressed to hear,
 Circling the infinite, their light did seem,
 Before his eye, paled to a pearl's dull beam.
 Attend, said God. O'er all he lifts his hand.
 Where will ye set my tent ? Where shall my temple stand ?
 All, longwhile dumb, distracting silence spread
 Throughout that host, as each were stricken dead ;
 Till, in such time as takes the sun to rise,
 Rejoicing, from earth's lap to upper skies ;
 One answer, scaling like a silvern cloud,
 Heaven's heights, and toned as one who thinks aloud
 In solitary reflection, reached the ear
 All listening, of the Almighty. Said each sphere
 Lord ! we will search all space ; and star by star,
 From central sun to utmost sphere ; and far
 As zenith is from nether, will we fare
 To find a fitting site for worship, where
 Thy name may be exalted, and a fane,
 Worthy, (but none such know we, wouldst thou deign
 The like to view) where thou might'st aye remain.
 Replied to each, one voice, a several sign.
 Have I e'er asked such honours, as 'tis yours
 To give ; or urged such wants as need endures ?
 I, worlds, your lord ? lord of life's every line,
 Material, spiritual, humane, divine.
 I made ye, I endowed ye. Ye are mine.
 Then trembled forth each orb, Thine, Lord, for ever thine.
 Thy breath from nothing filled us all at first ;
 And could again, as soon, the bubble burst.
 All that ye have, within myself have I ;
 God, am complete ; full inexhaustibly.
 I dwell within myself, and ye in me.
 Not in yourselves. I have infinity.
 The every thing in all things is my throne ;
 Your might is my might, and your wealth mine own.
 'Tis by my power and sufferance that ye shine.
 I dwell in light, and all your light is mine.
 Be dark, said God. Night was. Each glowing sphere
 Dulled. Night seemed everything and everywhere ;
 Save that in outmost space a feeble flare,
 Told that hell's pits forlorn were sunken there.
 Shuddered in fear the universe the while,
 Till God again embraced it with a smile.
 Divine delight, responsive, spread through space ;

And like a serious smile, whose gradual grace
Expands its soul born sunshine o'er the face,
One common rapture, Nature's joy, all place
All sense pervades. Come now, ye worlds, and hear
Said God our Lord, the truth I thus make clear.
My words are mercy ; wherefore should ye fear ?
Draw nigh to God the whiles He yet is near.
Straightwise, obedient to his sacred will
One great concentrate globe they crowd to fill,
Systems and suns pour forth their glowing urns ;
Full in the face of God the glory burns.
Hearken thou host ; thy trembling hope to raise,
I to all Being thus make plain my ways.
God the creator bade all being rise ;
And matter came in void, like clouds in skies.
Lifeless and cold, it spread throughout all space ;
And darkness dwelled, and frowned upon its face.
Chaos I bade depart this work of mine ;
And straight the mighty elements disjoin.
Then light I lit ; then order I ordained ;
And put the dance of atoms to an end.
Matter I brake and scattered into globes,
And clad ye each in green and growing robes.
Your sizes, places, forms, I fixed with laws ;
And wrought the link between effect and cause.
Your spheres I framed ; your stations, motions planned ;
These compass fingers all your orbits spanned.
Then shaped I lives for each which might inherit
Form, force, emotion, instinct, will ; not spirit ;
Then rational spirits I made, of heavenly worth,
Free, fallible, all ; those of angelic race,
These human ; variants of the same great class,
Immortal, nought eternal ; all possessed
Of such high powers that they each separate test
Their world-life offers masterfully might pass ;
Tests by me fixed ; and for that happier place
Fit them, which suits best their original birth
Deathless, divine. Round these, from every earth,
One universal nature spread through space,
I gathered forms and features fit for love,
Trust, pleasure, power and all I could approve,
To every spirit elect I told my name,
My love, my might, and whence all being came
To each soul, deathless, righteously decreed
To me accountable in thought, word, deed,
Through every sphere, age, nation, race, and clime,
For use of its own powers, own dues, own time.
Then every orb complete, along the sky,
In glory, beauty, order and harmony,
I launched. Souls, worlds did every gift possess,
Which could a mortal and immortal bless.
To all the hope of happier state was given ;

For all I keep one common, boundless heaven.
 Hear then, ye souls, for bliss supreme create,
 The just conditions of your future fate,
 Self-wrought. All free, 'tween good and ill to choose,
 To do the right, God love, and wrong refuse ;
 Or, fear of God despised, to elect to sin ;
 Free creatures, freely made. But all may win
 Life everlasting, everlasting joy,
 If ye do but the love of sin destroy ;
 The will, the intent, no spirit can defend,
 This only is offence ; and the sole mean ;
 Nor lies there any mediate hope between ;
 To atone for wrong, is to repent ; amend ;
 The all-holy and all-just, so made your friend ;
 Which lacked, shall never spirit enter heaven.
 How shall the soul still sin-fraught be forgiven ?
 How unforgiven, can ye thrice hapless, claim
 Hope in my mercy, trust upon my name ?
 All fallible, all, if not to sin self-driven
 May fall. But know, the pure and star-stepped path
 Of penitence, agewise, (which the atoning soul,
 Sad, but aspirant towards the promised pledge
 Of pardon, mercy asks, to blunt the edge
 Of judgment's blade, treads) 'scapes my righteous wrath,
 'Gainst evil ; and leads so straightly to the goal,
 Your forfeit fine has mercy paid to Heaven,
 That if ye will not journey on that way,
 The truth, the life, what is't ye merit, say ?
 Life is the field of choice. The paths of ill
 And good, which blissward this, that woe-wards tend,
 Are yours to follow freely, and fulfil
 Mine aims ; your own, ill, ye may still amend
 By resolute grief contrite. Not hopeless can
 One spirit be deemed : not even of God and man
 The foe self-named, who would his track conceal ;
 (Though me in conscious presence all things feel)
 And craftily seeks to annul mine ancient plan.
 Him and his deeds, his ends shall time reveal.
 But ye, O souls celestial born, who pause
 Even now, perhaps, 'tween sin's and virtue's cause,
 Be brave, be wise ; obey your Saviour's laws.
 Know that unbounded variance lies between
 All ill and good ; nor mediative, nor mean,
 Nor sacrifice, 'twixt such can intervene
 Nought save my mercy can be, or hath been.
 Death is life's gate ; and sin sometimes of bliss,
 To penitent soul, which mourns its deeds amiss :
 But wiser 'twere to flee from folly's way,
 And to Him turn who warns but loves you aye.
 Turn from your follies, fickle ones, and live ;
 And take the bliss your God alone can give.
 God the Creator, me all beings own ;

God the Redeemer, I will still be known ;
 God too the judge, the each, the three, the one.
 Again, the Everlasting cried, repent ;
 To bless or curse I am omnipotent.
 And what art thou, created being ? Round
 That world of worlds, his arm the Almighty wound ;
 The bright immensity he raised, and pressed,
 All trembling, like a babe, unto his breast.
 There, in the Father's bosom, rose again
 Of filial love the universal strain ;
 Strong and exultant, blissful, pure, sublime,
 It rolled, and thrilled and swelled, in notes unknown to time.
 Think ye that I who thus do ye maintain,
 Thus always cherish ye, or all were vain,
 Think ye that I cannot uphold in heaven,
 In righteous state the souls I have forgiven ?
 Be this a weightier task ? With God 'tis one
 To guide a sunbeam, or create a sun ;
 To rule ten thousand thousand worlds, or none.
 Art thou not with thy Lord, O host of heaven ?
 Fain to return to him who caused ye be ;
 Though faulty, restorable through love and fear ;
 The love of God, and fear of evilry ;
 Fain to return all spiritually, to me,
 If, penitent for offence, to come ye might be free ?
 Answered all spirits in that unbounded sphere,
 Entranced celestially then, first, to hear
 Their sins, whate'er, might sometime be forgiven ;
 The primal covenant, Lord, thou mad'st and willed
 With us, for our best good, be so fulfilled.
 Go, now, ye worlds, said God ; henceforth forbear
 Temples for me, or shrines, to upbuild in air ;
 None such I need. But learn ere ye depart
 My favoured temple is man's humble heart.
 Therein to dwell I leave my loftiest skies ;
 There shall my holiest of all holies rise.
 He spake ; and swiftly reverent to his will
 Sprang each bright orb on high, its sphere to fill.
 Glory to God, they chanted as they soared ;
 Father Almighty, be thou all adored.
 Thou art the glory ; we, thine universe,
 Serve but abroad thy lustre to disperse.
 Unsearchable, and yet to all made known ;
 The world at once thy kingdom, and thy throne ;
 In thee our God we live ; from thee we came,
 Time-stricken sparks of thine eternal flame.
 In thee like motes in the sunbeam do we move,
 Glow in thy light, and gladden in thy love.
 Earth only, like to a spot upon the sun,
 Sullen remained in that grand union
 Of joy, praise, harmony. Word spake she none.
 CLARA, Earth only had been chidden.

FESTUS.

Not alone.

High o'er all height, God gat Him on His throne,
 Downwards he bent, and like a meteor ball
 From Cepheus' hand we see, green burning, fall,
 God, as in pity, through the extense of space
 Again to run its ever-narrowing race
 Bowled the all-favoured, but the ingrate sphere,
 Which rushed like ruin down its dark career :
 And high the air's blue billows rolled and swelled,
 On many an island-world mine eye beheld.

CLARA. And where, and what is he, this mighty friend,
 Who to thee human thus his power doth lend ?
 Who bore thee harmless, as thou tell'st, through space,
 And brought thee front before thy Maker's face ?

FESTUS. I know not where he is. It is but at times
 He is with me ; but he memorably sublimes
 His visits thus, by lending me his might
 O'er things more bright than day, more deep than night.
 And he obeys me ; whether good or ill
 His, or my purpose, he obeys me still.

CLARA. O Festus ! I conjure thee to beware,
 Lest thus the evil one thy soul ensnare.

FESTUS. What ! may not a free spirit have preferred
 A mortal to his heart, as thou thy bird
 Lovest, because it singeth of the sky,
 Although it be as far below thy soul
 As I 'neath an archangel's majesty ?
 God will protect the atom as the whole.

CLARA. Him then I pray ; the spirit full must share
 The truths it feels with God himself in prayer.
 So guide us God, in all our works and ways,
 That heart may feel, hand act, mouth show thy praise ;
 That when they meet who love, and when they part,
 Each may be high in hope, and pure in heart ;
 That they who have seen, and they who have but heard
 Of thy great deeds, may both obey thy word.

FESTUS. Unto the wise belongs the sphere of light ;
 And to the spirit world compelling might.
 Yon sun now setting in the golden main
 Shall count me his ere next he rise again.
 One farewell round I long to make above
 As now with thee this leavetaking of love,
 Once more to circle round the central skies,
 And sound the silent infinite, where rise
 Creation's outflows, and the new-born light
 Smiles babelike on the lap of ancient nursing night.
 Would earth had nothing further fair to lure ;
 Nor being more to answer or endure.

But I foresee, foresuffer. Bound to earth
 Wrecked in the deeps of heaven, in death's expiring birth.

CLARA. Is all then over ? I ask not what hath come
 Of those I have heard once thine ; but fear, nor speak.

Fate brooks not to be questioned in the light.
 But shall we part? Is this ordained or not?
 Or is the earth-star struggling still with death?

FESTUS. Being of beauty, whose yet unfilled arms
 Form an incarnate Eden, and whose eyes
 The angel watchers o'er it, mine exiled,
 And gazing on thee gainless, smile no more.
 For if life's feelings flow not now as erst,
 Is not that they are vanished, like a stream
 Sun dwindled, or earth drained; but that their face
 Is frozen 'neath the world's wide winter! No!
 The liquid lightning of thine eye, no more,
 Nor flowery light which blooms upon thy cheek,
 Nor delicate perfection of pure form,
 A breathing revelation incarnate,
 Illumes for me the dusk of life. Night reigns.
 My heart's poles now are fixed like earth's in heaven,
 Shining in solid silence to the moon,
 Starry and icy silence; and all ceased
 Their torrid oscillances. Once it rolled
 In tropic splendour. Now experience treads
 Deep in the snow of blossoms. Maid of love!
 Were thy heart now free as a zoneless nymph,
 And on life's race of rapture mad to start,
 Like her of old, ere dropped the golden pome,
 'Twere vain to me; immoveable is mine;
 Still as a statue studying stony tome.
 Unite we may not. In this fateful life
 There is no real union. All things here
 Seem of monadic nature and with God
 All oneness and sole allness lives alone.
 Still even in this, time's age penultimate,
 And in my heart's exhausted mine, I feel,
 But I for ever have forsworn it, both
 The magic might of beauty, and the fierce
 Deliciousness of love. Yes! I must be
 In soul, in sacrifice alone. Thoughts once
 My masters, now in bonds retributive round
 My soul's invisible centre, titan-like,
 Hold I; and 'scaped from thrall to dominance feel
 As liberated god of old, who heaven's
 Unbounded calm is eyeing as he returns,
 Rejoicing, the eternal to rejoin.
 I hold life's feast, death's fast, indifferent,
 There is divorce between my heart and me,
 And I have neither bride nor brethren, I.
 But I achieve mine end, the end of all.
 From this is no appeal to death nor fate,
 Nor the just Gods; herein are all at one,
 Love me not therefore now; but when with me
 The great cessation happens; when the poles
 Are icing, and this tyrant of life's realm

Totters to execution, and well earned
 Ruin, attend me : whether in the flesh,
 Or in the spirit, be with me ; and mark ;
 One birdlike thought through death's white void shall fly,
 Right to thy bosom home, the thought of thee.
 Cherish it there as thine, and royally,
 In its snow palace. It will bear the gaze
 Of all the star-souls, and the spirit stars
 Which will the land of living light indwell.
 I feel earth slacken in rotation. Time
 Lays down his weary length as though the work
 Wherefore he had his hire were finished. Go.
 Now there is nothing left for us on earth,
 Save separation.

CLARA. Still I love thee ; still.
 Hast thou no further word ?

FESTUS. No ; death alone
 Is that I live for ; ever in mine eye ;
 Death, white-robed doorkeeper of heaven, whose sword
 Soul from the spirit severeth. For one
 In wisdom reinstated, and brought back
 Into the sovereign presence, the golden soul
 Which sees things as they are, nor as they are
 Only, but as through eternity they shall be,
 Known, justifiable, is thenceforth still ;
 As he who in the mystic caldron bathed,
 Immortal grew, but dumb. Henceforth, death-mute
 Am I ; and all things else with me consent.

CLARA. But this is not the end.

FESTUS. Go. I have said it.
 I am henceforth alone. My thought of thee
 Above all passionate fire-peaks, and above
 The sacred snow-line of my heart, where soul
 And spirit in ecstatic stillness join,
 Bides in perpetual purity. Farewell.
 Present, or absent, save the eternal aim
 Soul dominating I own, the all I love,—
 Live, look for. She is gone. She comes no more.
 Nor will come. Gone ! Even as the full-sphered moon
 Through thousand shafted pinewood looms, thus scored
 Lineally in countless columns to still eye ;
 So, apposite we, 'tween us, like differences ;
 But moving, this from that, one image sole
 Complete, fulfils sight ; such to me, through all
 Life's solid shows, obstructive, severative,
 Thy name, thy mien, thy memory ; by its own
 Act undistraught, unalterably perfect.
 So be it. This gone, another life be mine.
 I live not now to learn what best to make
 Of life's delights, nor nature's excellences,
 Nor soul's capacities, nay, no longer live
 To learn love's high resolves, nor fathom fate's ;

Though these with ours must join ere th' end. Mine aim
By this same innocent but traversed, I am fined
Past all I am worth ; and so 'tis life at last
Unworths the soul. May Heaven not note that thought.
No more. I dare not die. I scarce dare live.
The longer live I, I the further seem
From God parted ; draw no longer near
My life's desire. O ! wouldst thou God renew
The creature which of old thou madest, might meet,
Then, would I ; as, to save from death man's life,
Some passing stranger hurling off his cloak,
Leaps into deeps unsounded ; bid my soul,
Discumbered of all hampering qualities,
Long sought, loved, honoured, had, which seem but now
Conscience to blur, of the eternal, seek
The depths unspeakable of that love, that truth,
It is enough, it is, all, to know. 'Twere right
I should advise me well how best to act.
I'll to the hills, the cold, keen hills of God.
Blenched with all winter's myriad fold of snows ;
Nought 'twixt the air they breathe and spatial void ;
Thin, thin imponderably ; where soul may muse
Unbrokenly of Heaven ; where all the shows
And multiple hues sectarian of belief,
Barbaric or idolatrous, are by one
Divine and dread simplicity, replaced.
We are too rich in culture and ostent,
And art's chicane. Men worship sight and sound.
We fruit ourselves away to our own loss,
And no man's gain ; like some chance seeded palm
'Mid Afric sands. I come, ye hills, I come
Bare, fruitless as yourselves ; loss heaped on loss.

XLI.

Our first, our last, by heavenly fates impelled ;
 We again meet ; warned by the Spirit progressive, learn,
 Not man's design, mere compromise of good
 With ill, nor ill's, infeasible most, approves
 Celestial polity. Reason's plea, here shown
 Of gravity less than virtue's ; virtue's, there,
 Convictive less than reason's. What the twain,
 Unversant in fate's ultimate laws, reject,
 Grace gratulative enjoins. Not separate life,
 But oned, perfection's source.

An Oratory. Daybreak.

CLARA and ANGELA.

CLARA. I have erred, not sinned. My soul in faith assured,
 Feels conscious of acceptance, and of prayer,
 Night long companion of the stars, fulfilled.
 Relief and surety come on day's broad wing.
 My spirit, fountainlike, of the present full,
 O'erflowing with the future, life hath all
 I ever asked. God shriven then, be it mine
 What once I failed in to amend ; to undo
 The wrong and do the right. Thee thank I, Lord !
 For this repose of spirit, this sense of peace
 By thine approof made holy. Hear I not,—
 Fanning the calm of morn with sensible beat,
 The musical movement of an angel's wing,
 Vibrant with spherulic airs ? Nay, on my heart
 I feel the hint of a bodiless hand, as rose
 Wind-ruffled, might some pitying finger feel
 Its leaflets smoothening. Sweetened by seraph's breath,
 And scent of saintly garments seems the air.
 Speak, spirit ! for sure I am, one circlet me
 In narrowing ring, and swiftening folds, as erst
 Rounded the worshipping priest, of primal faith,
 His arrowy rock, sun-sainted. Voice thyself,
 Angel !

ANGELA. The spirit of her, thine earliest friend
 Am I.

CLARA. Thy best-belovèd, say.

ANGELA. Best loved. I
 Thy trials, tears and sighs have numbered all
 Since the sad day thou followedst to the tomb
 The form once dearest to thy sisterly heart.
 Deem not thyself uncared by me, when first
 A desolate heart embodied, with pale arms
 Outstretched to the pitiless world, and stern quatrain
 Of elements, thou well nigh meet'st fate half-way ;
 Nor think I have never marked thy course through life,
 Most like a weeping and dishevelled cloud
 Trailing its forlorn honours o'er the sea

Rude, reckless, unsympathetic, till it reach
 Time's western gates which, passed, ope but one way ;
 Nor eyed thee from woe's waves soul-whelming, seize
 The pearl of spiritual content which yet
 Thine angel brow shall light, as it hath earned
 The approving love of saints in heaven who watch
 O'er two estranged hearts, in whose union earth
 Her summing good awaits. His spirit who still
 Loves thee, thou yet shalt bless ; and, ere the end,
 Thine hallowing, will I guide unto his breast,
 God guiding me. For he himself foreknown
 Knoweth, called, chosen, but oh ! not sanctified
 Not perfected, nor of saints celestial peer
 While yet one selfish thought otherwards dims
 The soul presumptuous, or with one wish, not
 For their good aimed, disturbs. To thee is given
 The glory of teaching this, to me the grace
 Of bidding thee so act. When he thou lovest,
 Urged by thy gracious influence, grafted in him,
 Lives consonant with his destiny, so conceives
 Of life's great ends that duties show as soul's
 Best privileges, obedience stands transformed
 To triumph, then the end indeed draws nigh.
 Till penitent of all sin and sanctified,
 Even spirit elect pleaseth not wholly God :
 Nor itself gladdens in him with that whole joy
 The perfected conceive who walk through life
 Heart-crowned, with the aureole of divinity
 Their reborn nature glorifying.

CLARA.

Be this

And all things as God would.

ANGELA.

Ye both have erred.

Missioned for this cause prompt from heaven I come
 To show ye this. Thou shrankest to share with him
 His exaltation in the house of life,
 Miraculous, unconceived lest secular cares
 Thy way from peace and still humility warp,
 Mistrusting destiny ;—nor he his heart
 Would lovewards ope, lest the magnificent end
 World-rule, of God determined, in his hands
 Waver, or wane, or e'er his thoughts quit. Heaven
 Otherwise orders. Thou to him shalt reach,
 With God's design the fruit of perfectness
 Pure grace ; calm, holy, generative of peace
 And vital wisdom ; not on truth's domain
 Deviating by chance, nor on strict virtue's grounds
 Trespassing, as by stealth ; but in thy course
 Upheld by holiest patience, shalt with all
 Divine conditions congruous live, as earth
 Moves with the moving future of the stars,
 Fateful and fair as they : even here, in heaven,
 Quickened with life eterne, the saved, reborn

Of God the Spirit, are spirits themselves divine
Whose will the worlds await. Hence, seek thy fate.
This union is decreed in heaven—and blessed.

CLARA. I yield. Albeit aye erring, let me not
Urge pardon for defectible nature ;—that
Is God's decree, too ; but with purest gold
Obedience, haste to o'erlay God's mercy-seat,
The hour of life he grants us here.

ANGELA. It is well.
This hoped I from the first. Know, in yon orb
Where first,—this quit,—I, greated in soul by death
Rejoiced, thy loved one now, mine erst, to meet,
And point his spirit hopeful of heaven, to truth ;—
Orb, which then lit to rest the sun, but now
Him ushereth, as thou seest, this morn to toil
Celestial, and the glory of active life,
I thy felicitous fate presaged, than mine
Happier,—as seemed to eye of being which yet
Earth's echoes thrilled ; fate now fulfilled. Lo, there !
See where yon wanton sun, not yet ripe aged,
But, feigning infancy, with Morn's fair hours
Sent to arouse him, toys, and bids them bind
Their grossest gauzes round him ; lo ! he stirs,
And suddenly every golden swathe that ringed
His mummied limbs falls off ; his wakeners scud
Far, far, rose blushed ; he triumphs innocently ;
And smiling gives to eternity the day
He had promised ere he slept. Accept, so thou,
Life's renovative season, and be content
With all good compassable.

CLARA.

Be it as heaven wills.

XLII.

Perfection gained,
 True love his life renews, now sanctified,—
 Our world-seer counts humanity's gains, how earth's
 Best aims by the associate wise the' elect
 Of universal manhood leagued to instal
 God's peace, the peace of earth, show. 'Neath one head
 One moral empire seems secured, whose laws
 Tend proveably but to human weal, not power
 Selfish, nor private ends. What forces know
 Life's game? It may be fate. The all-tested soul,
 Whose aim to most serve men proves best to rule,
 His doomful choice here makes; war, life prolonged
 To the fore-flood fathers' years, with personal powers
 Like theirs who,—lords Preadamite, kinged the world,
 Incarnate forces of the universe,
 At option, or pure peace, nature's last boon,
 Death instant, his; he this, for man's good, claims;
 Unwitting that that hour the day of God
 Destined, earth's doom-day dawns. Time closes in.

Garden and Grove by the Sea. Mountain near.

FESTUS and CLARA.

FESTUS. Day of all days, bright daughter of the sun,
 From midnight hailed by rushing star-clouds, glad
 With their auxiliar light to perfect here
 My loved one's happy birth-hour; day of days,
 When first, fair bride, thy life-path crossing mine,
 This transept of existence traced, God now
 To himself hath hallowed, our united life;—
 Day which now gives me thee;—and thou, night's queen,
 In heavenly lowliness sublime, and meek
 With the sun's imputed radiance, like a soul
 Holy in God, aye brightening with the light
 Reflected from the Invisible; earth, albeit
 Now with thee waned, while nightly in thy lost light
 Death's daily gain stands forth, and conquest waste
 Of eternity over time; earth calls on you,
 Ye sacred lights, God's ministry in heaven,
 Each other eyeing, to bewail with her
 As I, these hours, so sadly, deadly sweet,
 Stopped in mid flight, which, else, might well be deemed
 Intransitive, immortal; hours, ah! too soon,
 For me, to cease, like the olden Paradise
 Earth's glory, flowery initial of time's tome.
 Thee, too, invoke I, of all fateful powers
 The complemental force, true one, thrice tried;
 This reverence, this my worship is to own
 Thy truthful steadfastness; and, separate life
 When each can yield help meet the other, a false
 And inconclusive end. How only blessed
 Men's aims when steadied by celestials' hands!

CLARA. My heart intuitive spake the truth, meseemed
The severance once thou threatenedst could not prove
Final. God's equity forbade.

FESTUS. Enough ;
Our guardian angels greeting soon agreed.

CLARA. And, bidden of heaven, our destined union fruits
In ominous bliss.

FESTUS. Most dear, most honoured bride,
Thou sayest. Hast heart to view earth's death-throes? Mark
Her end, with thine like timed? For as, while now
The westering sun, high on yon Alpine height,
Snow shouldered, like a maid for whiteness praised
Of neck or brow, blushing, in sweet defeat
Of admiration, comelier,—his farewell glow
Incarnadines, an instant,—let the moon
Orient, shed down her silver shafted rays,
As though in negligent rivalry to contest
The palm of perfect beauty, man's rapt eye,
Meanwhile, by the coalition unconceived
Of natural lights, droops, awed ; so, on thy head
Heaven's claims and earth's, mine too, in right of death,
One moment dreadly mingle.

CLARA. For all fates
To be prepared, I seek. Thou hast to me
The world oped and expounded : its needs, claims
On God ; its fore-reached purpose in his mind ;
Its compassed ends and failures. I, too, thee
May have served ; and the All-blessor's wise intents ;
By proof of heart obedience, and the gain
Of following truth rather than leading men.

FESTUS. So kind and providently instructive all
His counsels. Here, too, past the worth of worlds,
As though we owned the merits of angels, God
A season of satisfaction, ere all cease,
And rest hath given, to note the mighty march
And grieve its closure mind hath made ; the schemes
Of social life just perfected, now for aye
Disharmonized by their imminent end ; its gains
For toil material, and o'er powers matured
By happy use, which, sovereign servants, aid
Man's magistery o'er nature ; this in strength
Faith's match, unbasing mountains, bridging seas,
States binding to serve peace and freedom ; this
Starring anew the night with pit-born light,
Secrete from primal matter's nebulous flame ;
This, third of powers imponderable, which earth
Bridle in her orbit, gravitative, or this
Attractive ; this our knowledge o'er the gods
Swiftening and time's poor possible ; this which guides
By mineral instinct, through the deep, tall ships
Sail winged ; or this not life, but life-like, heat,
Source of inanimate motion and innate,

Caught from God's breast ;—all nourishing powers with man
Leagued, want and death—earth's evillest ills—to slay ;
And now, long time victorious.

CLARA. So advanced,
Completion would the curse not blessing seem
Whereto creation tends, were not God's love,
Making this world's fulfilment that world's base,
Better than all we hope. Earth's end how else
Conceive, or justify by law divine
Not less than natural which, in things made, makes
Perfect, fore-state to fall? If life him owe
For breath, for more, death ; access limitless
To ampler being, God's plenitude. So, earth
Ended, all holds that's well ; faultless the fair ;
Potent the pure ; the great and good, joy-souled,
Each other helping, serve the many with love.

FESTUS. Who loves thee, Lord, lives like thee ; is, does, good.

CLARA. Man surely grows more godlike daily, nearing
His final future. Thee sublimed in soul
And with life's aims uplift to loftier ends
Time's lapse hath found.

FESTUS. Time, too, to good men given
By work devout, unselfish, sage, to raise,—
As lands by hidden force their beach upheave
To levels unforeshought,—man's social mass
To purer life, more reasonable, more just,
More parallel with God's plan. Behold ! the bounds
Of every separate science, known, and all
In one consummed ; all modes of state-rule made
Like operative of good ; all liberties
Coincident with authority ; every faith
Grounded on heavenly influences, and made
Their compensating errors so to adjust
As truth's success to ensure. O'er all, peace, most
Approximative of earth to heaven, and love
Brotherly, thirst for others' good, not blood.
Now urging nations, more content me yields
Than earth's full orbèd realm, my doom. The world
One grand equality now kings. Slave, no more,
Nor lord,—their common nature regnant—breathes ;
Rich drone, nor beggar clammed. Sin, vice and wrong,
Hate, misery, lawlessness, contempt of kind,
Self-worship, ignorance, fraud, impiety, all
Life's fellest plagues, impurity of thought,
Or word, or deed, fled hellwards, the chief wise
Revering nature, teach hope : the holy chosen
Pray, interceding for their fellows, God.
Earth's great ones plight to amity, states no more
Ravening for war's dread flesh-feast, seethed in blood,
From lust of soil or pride of power, but yearning
Solely for liberty self-earned, or secured
For others, knowledge, mental and bodily health,

And increment of the good God's function, fill
 Pacific, each their just and natural bounds
 Lakelike. Towards this all times have wrought ; and now
 Whoso man's worldlife notes, his qualities metes,
 His faculties ; sums the vast designs or boon
 Even now benevolent hearts cherish, and brains
 Restless to enlighten souls, and the flesh free
 From servile toils, needs sordid, that to quests
 More pure, more grand, the world's day may be leased
 Largelier, and aims best worthy life, of heaven
 Anticipative,—wots well no ampler lists,
 No fairer scope could God have given, than earth
 As now, state-chequered, with all patterns graced
 Each excellentest, of faith, rights civil, grades
 Of culture, social, mental ; cunning craft,
 Refining art ; nor deftlier planned to aid,
 By gradual concentration of good gained,
 The just expansion, just, though slowly achieved,
 Of man's supreme capacities, which, sphered
 Integral, all, we know shall cease. Nor less,
 Author and perfecter of man's wondrous life !
 Mark we herein thy wisdom which brooked not
 Men should grow wise too fast, nor blessed too soon,
 Thy bounty in withholding ; of sage restraints
 Lavish ; in mere deficiency the grace,
 Most manifest, of perfectible power ; that all
 Grounded in good and ill, made sage through choice,
 By pure contrition proved, may seek in thee
 Sole, their divinity, and attain. So fit,
 So perfect, seems his training, both in kind
 And instance, of our race, that while we, here,
 This calm concentrate life, large yet intense,
 Consuming, near our culminant destiny,
 The last necessities of his state o'ercome,
 Man—like an exiled prince, who through all time
 Burns to regain his natal throne—hath proven
 By peril, self-abnegation, sacrifice
 By labour, learning, largesse, earnest rich
 Of kingly intents, the integrity of heart
 By birthright his, that purity, that faith
 In faith, and charity to his kind, the wise
 Know needful to reunion with their God.
 For, as of old, truth's substitute, in shows
 Mimetic of the moral sphere, through rocks
 Dragged naked, bounding breathless out of flames ;
 Walled in the lone grey death cell midst the moor,
 A death regenerative of spiritual life,—
 Waiting by nodding rock triumphant proof
 Of ghostly call, or innocence ; by beasts
 Or men, more brute, with sword and brand and snare
 Driven desperately, till the delusive goal
 Raught, lo ! the deep and hidden well, whence risen

And throughly purified, his holy peers
Elect, joined, their austere splendid life
Partaking and companioning ; signs but these
Of the soul's struggles, toils, victories, and its blessed
Acceptance with the power which, granting life,
Tests meetly all responsible spirits ; thenceforth
Him delegate of God, behoved to abide
In ever ripening certitude,—and truth's
Grave mysteries, here, all lore beside outworth,—
The advent of the Eternal, and the e'er
Renewable triumph of truth's light. So, now,
Self-chosen example of humanity, here,
The initiate of philosophy, while freed
From physical contest, perilous feat and fear
Of elements embattled,—tests once meet
For times of ignorance,—versed in every art
That life adorns or consecrates ; in law
Ennobling, science which sustains, in ties
Social and sympathies ; in relations pure
Alike with kind and kindred ; skilled in lore
Profoundest, man hath heired from ages passed ;
A doer of good deeds ; strong to endure
The stings of slander, torts of strength or fraud ;
Perfect in faith's just ordinances ; in all
The duties of humanity, must, perforce,
More even than erst, clearly approve himself
Truth's champion, virtue's friend. But, who aspires
His nature to consummate, to partake
Strict and entire communion with the source
Sublime of soul ; resolved, though lone, to tread
The heavenward path of wisdom,—quits, content,—
Life's labyrinthine round ; earth's charming lures ;
Time's fraudulent vanities ; abhorrent, shuns
Man's meaner passions ; paltry pleasures, cares
Carnal or covetous ; wily ambition's schemes,
Rank ostentation's toys ; the solid world
Held but a shadow, every idol form
And mode of worship waived, trusts schemes no more
Of faith widespread, wise seeming once, but, now
Gone like a molten glacier, that of old,
While yet the youthful sun his waxing beam
Shot on our shivering orb ice armoured, aye
His burning glance fate-fraught and fascinate,
By dale and hill followed, till, o'er the brink
Precipitous of the abysmal main, it fell
In a dry cataract shimmering on the beach,
No more to rise ; but, henceforth, spirit sole
In spirit adoring, he, the enfranchised heart,
Trampling on death, and more, the fear of death,
Shall equal angels here : the soothly wise,
Separate to righteousness, self-reverent, sworn
Earth's peace to endeavour aye in spite's despite ;

Their nature hallowed by their aims ; inspired
 With God's truth, knowing all things as in God,
 So from him emanant, and, as proveably
 Purposed by him, good ;—evil ignoring save
 As cloudlet which the calm briefwhile obscures
 Of perfect being : one substance, all divine,
 Eternal, indivisible, vital ; these
 With him, all life, unite, as altar fires
 Assimilate with the heavens.

CLARA. Should never man
 Near, more than now, perfection ; and the best,
 Sinners by nature, if by grace sinless, clothed
 In righteousness divine, as mount with snows
 Eternal, while within red rabid fires
 Smoulder, although perhaps subdued, still joys
 Are there to some not world-known. Let us boast
 In secret, of our thrones, like kings disguised,
 And as, in eastern spousals, bride and lord
 Crown each the other, kingly obeisance, so,
 Humiliate with the excess of grace God given,
 Praise we his merciful pleasure in pardoning sins
 Of loved ones, greater than their power to offend.

FESTUS. Thy soul let revel in its own innocence
 Even as in snow the snow-pure ermine.

CLARA. Heaven
 Is in our inmost spirit as in the eye
 Yon imaged infinites.

FESTUS. All plans forespent,
 Pleas present, purposes of future life,
 To him surrendered who gives all ; the passed
 Errors abjured ; mine heart I have molten in tears
 As kings their gods erewhile in gold to pay
 Some covetous conqueror ; but to my soul God
 Content with nought but all, hath all at last
 Remitted and forgiven. It is faith removes
 This mountain of our sins, and in the sea,
 Tearful, of penitence casts. As by art's stress,
 Granite and steel flow free as oil, so 'neath
 God's awful love man's conscience stilly thaws,
 Whate'er its self-shaped purpose losing : here
 Withdrawn, self-banished, I the ascendant sign
 Wait of earth's demolition ; knowing still
 With God one preappointed end yet holds,
 One high design yet unfulfilled. This, soon,
 The assembled chosen of nations, of our race
 Chiefest in worth and wisdom, shall make known
 Returning from all lands, their vast consent,
 In sage and solemn secrecy achieved,
 With doom divine, recorded in the roll
 Of foreordaining fate, and thine own spell
 Predictive of pacific power.

CLARA. Our God

Is happily lord of peace and union. Strife
Divisive nought agrees with love and heaven.

FESTUS. But unity hath shades, modes manifold,
Many are the ways God shows us we may serve
Man, and his own good cause. These even the toils
And trappings of the fight by virtue waged
In man's behoof 'gainst ill; the dust, shouts, sweat
Of struggling swarms attract; and these, a spot
Contemplative, where memory may recal
The simple sweets of early love, the heart's
Wild honey, gathered in green glades man's eye
Seems even to startle; which, like the wrestler's oil
In grappling with the world or ghostly foes,
May loosen the adversary's grip.

CLARA. Need were
Our deeds, motives to scan, and their results
Carefully, prayerfully; every daily sum
Of duty verify by its holy rule
In God's celestial key wherein, more fixed,
More true than nature's fleet forms, all acts, means
And ends contingent, through each factor traced,
Thought, feeling, interest, ignorance, circumstance
And temperament stand solved; of our moral sense
And soul's vitality sole test, prime rules,—
That each one's acts and purposes comport
With others' good not less than ours.

FESTUS. It is this—
Life's universal law, the code divine
Graved in all hearts wild, cultured, though unwrit,
Justly to live and temperately; in peace
And charity with the world; content with fate;
To law obedient human and divine,
And to the lord of law; to all that breathe
Kind; sociable with mankind; honouring all
Life's pure relationships; to worship God
Sincerely, and to do men good; abet
Virtue, the right, always 'gainst vice, wrong, ill;
Truth aye to speak,—for to speak truth's to talk
In God's own tongue, truth middle term 'twixt earth
And heaven! to labour honestly, and rest
Holist, cheerfully, for he who made
All things, both rest and toil hath hallowed;—us
Ones with the one supreme in will, and rounds
With good the common nature of all life;
Which of and in him born, him serves and loves
With open trustfulness. Whate'er the end,—
On this sure base,—that God's wide equity
Commensurable with mercy, and than all law
Juster, all tabulated claims o'erriding
Bidden or forbidden, and which by principles
Precept supplants or modifies,—rest we; safe
That even as he himself immutable

In essence, but reflecting outward lives,
As ocean clouds, shows towards created soul
Reciprocal eternally ;—as we love
Loving ; condemning as we err ; to all
Revering him, resembling, boon ; so man
To deity linked, by life immortal, feels
In his inmost being when, heartwrung, he forespeaks
Heaven's judgment on iniquitous deed ; when wroth
At treachery's triumph ; or, when uttering truth
Spiritual, inspired,—all states external lost
Like star-dust from a seraph's wing in flight
Upwards, conscious identity with God.
Such union now earth's best reality ; time's
Most chief, most choice delight ; the soul at peace ;
Life's rolling round, to him submit, the Spirit
Divine, of loftier ends once meant for man
Reminded, deigns to regulate. As when,
In class, the pensive tutor,—his high heart
Ambitious as a bow upstretched to outshoot
All rival boughs, on vast designs intent
Inly of human weal, truth proven, or law
Harmonic, 'tween creator and create,—
By timid monitor summoned, shuts away,
Sighing, his sacred theories, and proceeds
To lowlier needs in earnest ; bent to inform
His docile pupils how our sphere the sun
Spins round, and in what posture, blandly, at once
The mimic globe—by puerile guilt awryed
From its right incline, restores, minutely just,
To ciphers graved on the arc meridian, brazen,
Steadfast, all circling ; our true attitude
Toward heaven thus shown ;—so God, by prayer invoked
Stooping to instruct the sons of men, corrects
To his eternal and immoveable law
Soul, from its due position sin-wrenched ;—he,
So much less prone to punish than to teach
Pleased, pleased to expound and rectify, nor time
On passed mischance waste, he himself for us
Gives as best lesson ; and our poor fallen orb
Bids walk again, head skyward ; man's main end,
Whate'er his first deflection, being to make
Now, best amends we may ; to know, be, do
The most we can, of good ; for that we know
And do, we in truth are ; and thus bettered, live ;
His joy and ours combined. For, when God first
Launched on its infinite course this sphere of man,
This mixed humanity,—through good and ill
Contestful, whirled—as earth through gloom and sheen—
Zoned it with laws, with broad degrees of right
Humane swathed, and with binding lengths of love
Divine, convergent, crossed, he midst all powers
Of fate the intelligible orb enthroned ;

Housed it with angels ; him, their common source
 Beneficent, of light, life, godship round
 In graduated freedom ranged, and bade
 To all the bliss thought creatural could conceive,
 And live, aspire. We, thus encouraged, taught
 All vital wisdom profitable to man
 In thought, word, deed and love to him, our being's
 Fitness and joy most high ; taught here to know
 The virtues are heaven's elements, as air,
 Fire, water, earth, the world's ; and that the soul,
 Simple and inseparable, conformed by their
 Pure quality to his heavenly substance, lives
 Thence, trans-essentiate, secretly in God,
 As a star in day ;—find, too, as by access
 Of finite to the infinite, nature's end.

CLARA. How rich in teachings is God's word !

FESTUS.

O soul

Of saintly light, wherever truth be voiced,
 God's word know, as his law in all that's right.
 Wherever soul acts righteously, intends
 Truth's triumph, or man's weal, with mutual joy
 There creature and Creator meet ; not less
 On crag or desert sand, than temple floor
 Of porphyry polished, or tall columned courts
 With moonwhite marble impaved and night-black slabs.
 Where heart thou findest pure, holy, unselfish life,
 Love brotherly, matched and crowned with love of God,
 Seek there his people, his chosen ; hear there his word
 With all perfections teeming. Who now lodge
 The living saving truth, nor famishing soul
 Gorge on gross shadows, and the unfoodful chaff
 Of ceremonies artistic,—servile form
 Of words, nor tinkled time of worship, need,
 Nor dome spire-peaked, sky peering. Life's best part
 In voiceless converse and serene commune
 With heaven's soul-sanctifying spirit, who gives
 To every age fit inspiration, passed,
 They in their own hearts hold realm, shrine and God,
 Him in themselves adoring. The soul's war,
 Its struggle not yet to admit the Almighty force,
 Though round it and above ; the heart's revolt
 Ended and pardoned ; dread, despair, doubt, quelled,
 God to his saints reveals himself as peace,
 Parent of bliss. Such, glorified, have sped
 From deathful nature and her fettering sins,
 By divine impulse into life eterne.
 There, errless, they abide. Nor hold such lot,
 Though of pontifical function void towards man,
 Irreverend ; for, by none else shareable,
 Save their victorious spirits who, fined in fires
 Of trial and of soul conflict, running bright
 Pure, ductile to God's hand as virgin ore,

Original innocence have regained ; these sole,
 Bo God sealed, true felicity know ; whose breasts
 Ty rational light illumed ; and filled with plans
 Worthiest of man, angelic purposes,
 Beam, inly sensible of divinity ; thence,
 Such serious rapture radiating, as felt
 Once, maketh happy aye. Yes, these are they
 Who in purity of heart, in humbleness
 Of spirit, faith-fraught, in holiness of life,
 In sin condemned, repented of, abjured,
 In will quiescent as the wave Christ's feet
 Trode tranquil ; who, their being yielding up,
 To him who asks, as a sigh to one beloved,
 Are wholly God's. Let whoso hath these signs
 Congenital with the spirit's birth, rejoice.
 For him time renovates the sphere ; redates
 Earth from its primal order ; trebly bright
 Shine sun and moon ; the sweet stars shape themselves
 Into all oracular asterisms ; the clouds
 Space-born, like thoughts of mind, mount at his spell
 Compulsory, to forespeak things coming ; air,
 God's fan, wafts Eden ; and the large, live world
 Throbs palpably beneath his hand ; his heart
 Is as an ark twin cherubs, prayer and praise,
 Fend with life-sacring wings.

CLARA. Less worship, more
 Virtue, the same in all faiths, and their sum
 Earth needs ; a godly race self given to God,
 Who of his mind partaking, in his will,
 By boundless acquiescence, co-operate ;
 Lovers of natural life and cherishers,
 Though more of spiritual existence, still ;
 Pacific ; holding each man sacred guest
 In common with himself, of one great host ;
 Yielding to him their nature, he, who all
 Defect o'erfills, to them, his righteousness ;
 These in the mirror of God's mind his will
 Reading, shall satisfy, perfective ; his
 Whose thoughts are high as mountains, deep as seas ;
 Who in either hand beginning holds and end
 Of things ; pours forth creation, or withdraws,
 Like him of yore whose lordly lay led back
 The rivers gladdening, reflux, to their source ;
 Regeneration's sacred cycle ; his
 Whose eye guides nature ; goalless yet.

FESTUS. How long ?
 Nature is full of God ; but he abounds
 Immeasurably o'er all, who all hath made.
 Not that I trace Him sensuously on earth,
 By foot or finger : not in flower that blooms
 Or frame life-breathed ; or, so might men enjoy,
 Endamage, Heaven's high majesty ; deform,

Define, and, calculable, sum up the God,
 Thus virtually denied. It is in His laws,
 All cause, invisible, not in their effects,
 That operant now 'mid darkness, now through light
 And powers imponderable, bring forth to life
 Bud, blossom, breath and being, Deity lives ;
 Communes with mind made, and the whole pervades
 In Him comprised ; laws, which though yet by him
 Ordained, his monarch will, at choice o'errides
 And adds to all these elements which we know
 A sense of his Divinity in the heart
 Insworn, and in our soul of souls, death-freed
 Of spirit ; man hails eternal and divine.
 Even evil tells of God, to the pure soul
 And thoughtful, as divinely endured.

CLARA.

To know

Prayer radius-like unites the soul with God,
 All central, all surrounding ; shuts the world
 Out of the heart ; and sets frail being to face
 Eternal virtue, rapture gives ; but prayer
 Preferred, is oft more, prayer fulfilled, means, end.
 Lo, mine now granted in my joy and thine.
 Think, too, how patient God, how wise man's friend ;
 Triumph deferring till, full faith assured,
 Our ill-timed importunities brooked awhile—
 The world to its forefated end approach.

FESTUS. Man entered on a higher course, the scheme
 Of things seems in these later, kindlier days,
 Nobilitated. No slaughterous tools of war,
 By false-souled priests ill-blessed, by reckless scribes
 Lauded, tear men to quivering fragments, now ;
 Nor sword, death's reaping-hook for human corn ;
 Nor cannon's syllogism confutes the right
 In bloodiest controversy. One round belief,
 One universal and simple faith in God,
 'Stablished o'er earth, from slavish ignorance freed
 And tyrant superstition, one most just
 Perfect and catholic polity, makes mankind
 Though late, an unity ; shows man purified,
 Man elevated, man peaceful, man made wise ;
 Worthy God's rule ; but rule, by his will, on me
 Devolved. And me, the world's vast littleness
 Mocking no more, I look not for that prize
 Vouchsafed me with vain ambition, nor with pride
 Hail, but a toilful privilege deem to serve
 In duty spiritual my brotherly race ;
 Judge it the righteous fine I pay for wish
 Presumptuous granted. Earth's conclusive hour
 Hath clicked its gentle alarm ; and all too late
 'Twere to recall what, if regretful, I
 Have caused, the doom of earth. I have seen ere now
 A penitent people, prostrate, bid remorse

Trample their hearts as in a winepress ; seen
 Nations when galled with the insults of years
 And wrongs of generations sacrificed
 To the few's selfish class-pride, at last roused
 Wroth, and their ire incendiary demark
 Through all the land ; here by burned cities ; there
 By beacons palaces, fuming night with scent
 Of cedarn roofs—the tapestried handiwork
 Of queens long since anointed, long embalmed,
 Palling the flaunting flames ; sudden, the bold,
 With sense of wrong irreparable, and dread
 Of retribution, chill ;—for soon revenge
 At conscience' feet confesseth,—and in vain
 Time's slowly purpling fruit would fain await
 Repentant, remediless ; so I, my soul
 To thoughts tumultuous yielding once, too prompt
 To impound the future, would, but can, defer
 No longer, time's last end. The final word,
 Raze earth to its foundations, hath gone forth.
 Hungers the inevitable to be fulfilled,
 As gods of the orient, uncomputed years,
 Yearn for their avatars. This end foreknown,
 The secret thought—as torrent subterrene
 Wrenched by distorting strata from the light,
 Falls inly thundering on earth's heart, my soul
 Fills with unnatural tumult, for man's sake
 Not ours, though blent inextricably. And as,
 While storms rend air, on high reigns spatial calm,
 Where spheres their ancient tracks of light re-rolling,
 Salute in saintly silence, storm and star
 Like just intent accomplishing,—so thy life,
 Pure, peaceful as the path ætherial trode
 By her now regnant in mid heaven, and mine,
 Long time by doubt and passion tempested,
 In common with the world, reach one same end.

CLARA. When, know we not, nor would I know. But all time
 Seems now a boon unreckonable ; most fit
 Therefore for godliest spirit to rouse the hearts
 Of thoughtless nations to life's imminent close ;
 And as of old the arch-druid, golden knifed,
 From his altar crag now lonely amid the moor,
 Doled forth to awestruck tribes by brands, God's fire,
 Their willowy bowers or rockhewn nests, in brows
 Of cliffs, scooped like the sand-swallow's, to warm,
 Hearths sanctify, and life forefend from bale ;
 Do thou, man's thronèd minister, send round
 Thy flame-winged words warning the world of doom ;
 Blessing with hope of heaven : that all in heart
 May home them and hold holy.

FESTUS. The world's rich
 In warnings ; and advice creeps oft-times round
 To find one, goal and starting-point. Already

A thousand tongues I have caused to monish men,
 Incredulous, to this day, of things to be ;
 Nor by one hour would I, for selfish ends,
 Time's scheme foreclose. The soul made perfect here,
 By him who in secret works, and openly,
 Patent in nature's every fact while yet
 In operation latent, helps by means
 Thrice sifted, heaven, to sow with both hands brimmed
 The liberal truth, nor faint ; to scatter hope
 And reap belief ; my guerdon sole, as yet,
 To bask me in thy rare retreats, content !
 Where, stripped of mere conventional values, life
 And time are, by deliberate conscience, priced
 At their just worth, the good that may be wrought
 In them and through them for mankind, by mind
 Actful, not o'er solicitous ; where the mock
 Empire which custom sways, the painted forts
 Unreason mans 'gainst truth, delude no more ;
 Where eyes o'ertaxed with the world's tinsel glare,
 The luminous rottenness of sacred shams ;
 The microscopic grandeurs flattery feigns
 Eye-fawning, her own pettiness to hide ;
 The foil of false repute ; the sickly flash
 Of pale and pasty wit tricked from the crown
 Of ignorance worn by puniest judging ;—add,
 Where ears, distraught by their gong-beaten lies,
 Who betwixt obscurity and ignominy
 Courted, embrace both,—gluttons of contempt ;
 By full-fed pity's after-dinner groans
 O'er lean men's nuncheons ; the paper trumpet's blare
 Blown, till it bursts, of charity ; by the oaths
 Obscene, of gentle doctrine gone stark mad :
 And babble of opinion's shallowing stream
 All down its daily kennels,—may each, in still
 And wholesome shade, rest ;—while even here, to view
 The eye-brine trickling down to the treacled lips
 Of adulation fined, greed hoped ; to hear
 The bruit of nations questing after dreams,
 And dream-names, sworn to capture liberty ;
 Might make one wretchless smile. Have I not seen
 An ignorant people serve the living God ;
 And self-dubbed sapients, grovelling at the graves
 Of certain dead rogues, ycleped philosophers,
 Call their foul faith religion ?

CLARA.

Rate not now

'Neath their just worth faith nor philosophy ;
 The soul's instructor this, that sage moderatress,
 Apt in one faultless breviary, to imblend
 All faiths heaven's angels might use here with us,
 We there with them.

FESTUS.

Know I not, here and there,

An amiable mild-mannered seer whose vast

Inheritance of the skies escheats to dust,
 By voluntary defeasance, atom-wise,
 Stake out his lines of being, necessity
 Reason, the absolute, negative,—what not?
 Measure himself 'gainst God? Assume to be
 God? and survey the universe of things
 With some dissatisfaction as a feat
 Scarce worthy of him, nor comparable at all
 To that he meant it should be when—his soul
 Diffused, meanwhile, in death through space—he next
 Should wake to conscious deity?

CLARA. Nay, let be.
 Such bitterness savours not perfection. Sneer
 Nor sarcasm peace befit, nor spirit affied
 To charity's friend, content.

FESTUS. Thee firm I know
 On mercy's side, by kindest nature bound
 The punitive ire stern justice vaunts to assuage,
 Though lashing but with tongued scourge, and scorn
 Of foes presumptuous, even if weak. As when
 Heaven's lesser bale, through many a stellar house
 In militant triumph riding, till by law
 Gods even must vail to, stalled, his fiery team
 Reins stationary, and, chafed at forced recoil,
 One bloodshot feverous glance on the luckless lands
 Thrall'd to the sign he fires, thrown, backening turns;
 Stamps in the nations fury and civil strife
 Disastrous; causing the social elements
 Clash; or, through ruinous insurrection, seek
 Self Sundering, raw contracts, less just; if now,
 Beauty's mild orb, that fair benignant, beam
 Conjunctively disposed, on the dread scene
 Time groans withal, her stern swain's human realm
 Compassionating, his brow, frown writhen, she smooths
 While yet far, with boon-asking eye; and now,
 Neared timidly the starry pest her charms
 Dazzle, toys guileful with the death-strung nerve
 Of his bow sky-arched; his angriest bolts steel-beaked
 Lulls womanishly; with strange delicious touch
 Sleeking their storm-packed plumes; each battailous fate
 To stress competitive softens, to wordy wars,
 Or emulous bent; thus tempering every plague
 She fails to avert, or, 'midst her piteous breasts,
 Paler than moonlit lilies, hides;—the world
 Breathes bold, nor wots the secret treaty of light
 Sealed in heaven's chancellerie;—so thou, sweet bride
 Predominating by mere humanity, sweep'st
 All bitterness from my heart.

CLARA. Such grace, mayhap
 Thou deemest weakness still; and much misdoubts
 My mind the emprise thou vowest me to.

FESTUS.

Be brave!

Thy weakness brings forth strength, as the young slight moon
 The year's main tides. Nor I have strength, nor thou
 Aught to endure or do but comes from him,
 Tasker and lesson. Joy be it meanwhile, to me
 Whose loftiest hope is lowliest even to stand
 'Mong devotees of good ; a vital voice
 With the great whole in unison ; to feel
 How, raised by God's good mercy above the clash
 Of narrow creedlets, jarring systems, sects
 Sick of unnatural piety, overlaid
 With truths so twisted as show well nigh false ;
 One soul from faiths complex and frivolous freed,
 Grace-moved, more worthily truth to construe, may,
 Through simplest trust in God and neighbour man,
 Learning a wiser, teach a happier way.
 Rather than all these spurious sanctities,
 Give me the loneliest desert where man's free soul
 Towers naked in God's eye, and, as a temple
 Empty, but full of awe, let me all shrines
 By art debased, for heaven's uncolumnd fane,
 And truth's unritualled service, quit ; a faith
 Faith fills with visits of angel deities ;
 A pastoral rite, a patriarchal creed ;
 A filial worship of the all-fatherly God ;
 A covenant binding with the Eternal,—this
 Of truth communicative ; this bold to embrace
 The vital Infinite. The soul which wins
 Rest in the alone divine, once purified
 From all ills gotten of contact with the world,
 Its hollow shows and rank impostures, dread
 Of wrongs impossible to impute to God,
 Yet sure his justice, as all his attributes—
 Will boundlessly affect intelligent life,
 Lives rebegotten, a personal verity,
 By him in view of his complete design
 The whole, conceived ; and so thereto akin,
 And unto God, name greater than all writ,
 All wit, can teach, that he who made, and told
 The broad affinity, seals and sanctifies.

CLARA. Shows there no peril lest ghostly pride should snare
 Our spirits somewhere in parleying, pondering, even
 These ends, so vast, of God ? To touch on, seems
 So oft, in view defective, to comprise.
 God grant us humble hearts and lowly thoughts.

FESTUS. Love I not, too, humility, these thy plains
 Of soul, rich in the roots of fruitful things ?
 None but the great in mind, the true in heart,
 The just in life, the perfect, seek thy peace,
 Thy pastures, where the consoling spirit oft
 Walks beatific ; sanctifies the breast
 Which suffers sovereignly, and, all kind, confirms
 The soul that lists not other's gifts, nor need,

Each to himself sufficing ; but its own,
 Loyal, asserts to vindicate God's rights,
 And, boasting nought its own, all claims as God's.
 God is my friend, and nature. Sun and sea
 Are my next neighbours. Yon great main and I
 In turn expatiate o'er the same sands ; wake
 By each other's bed ; or by the sad moon trined,
 Her silvery kiss of pure and equal love
 Receive ; joint boon and bond. Oft in his sleep,
 And in this neap of time, I overhear
 The ubiquitous winds weird secrets interchange
 With the elements of the future ; he alone,
 To those exalted mysteries unbid ; oft
 From morn's slow opening eye to eve's, sun-drooped,
 Track his broad dial's hands of ebb and flood ;
 Now, like a favourite thought, recurrent, dart
 Into his bosom ; now, like falcon poised,
 Mantling his wings, strained stirless in mid air,
 Float, with the sea-sway swaying ; upon his heart's
 Large and deliberate beat, rocked. Earth, for me,
 Sometimes, I dream, forgetful of fate's plan,
 A niche hides, ivy fingered, dank with dew,
 Close by her side, where, when the gay day ends,
 Her world-worn brood she lulls ; with sweets alone
 Of sleep unsurfeited. The moss-branched woods,
 Traversed by sloping lanes of evening light,
 Greet, whispering to themselves, my wonted foot ;
 And you, gaunt hills, that stand with broad brows bared
 As in perpetual consciousness of God
 With us, and inward audience of the heavens ;
 And pass me along nightly with solemn touch ;
 In the austere comity of mountains me
 Accept, your reverent comrade, like endowed
 With reticent virtue ; ye, who but seem to lack
 Organic utterance ; quick with sacred thought ;
 And through the eye's still commune not unskilled
 To impart, prompted by dumb immensity,
 Majestic meditations. Among your forms
 Unmoved, the spirit consentient with that power
 Working miraculous in all round, grows apt
 And proper to the Eternal. We believe
 In silence, looking on the face of things
 Which have returned through changeless years his gaze
 Who in time's fluctuating effects,—absorbed
 'Mid their surroundings, iceberglike,—joys not ;
 But in his own pure mountainous purposes,
 Fixed as the ever sedent fates, the orb
 Which dominate. Drawn thus, and in right accord
 Towards the divine, we walk, though on the intense
 Circumference, we, as He while all within,
 To all exterior ; walk, like paced with God,
 Leaning on him, and, conscious of the vast

All-presence of his arm, advance ; no more
 Maker with made, nor just law with blind force,
 Or act of chance misblending ; but sustained
 By his impartible strength, and by the smile
 Cheered, which all spirit turned Godward doth illume,
 We tread down each day's shadow, and so step
 Clean o'er the soiling world.

CLARA.

The world nathless

We too much love, for those imperial tasks
 And kinglier ends the soul is destined to,
 By him who calls us not to trifle but reign.

FESTUS. It is manworld only, this petty universe
 Deformed by sin and selfhood, to the sense
 Breeds vileness, and repugnance of pure thought.
 God's outer sphere is faultless. Be it man's
 To accord the soul-world with the world-soul, God.
 When from each heart youth's grand illusions perish,
 Mean wits deem so much wisdom earned ; conceits
 Exploded counting virtual truths, not knowing
 The multitude here of sectional sciences
 Accomplished ignorance. Truth can be but one ;
 Of all, the essence sole and simple.

CLARA.

See !

The blue of heaven o'ercast. Each natural change
 Seem I to dread, sad forenote of the end.
 A rising gust o'erawes me. Vain alarms
 Doubtless, but erewhile to be verified.

FESTUS. Life's shadow, death, hastes to enshroud the world.

CLARA. You skiey mourners that, like mine own sad thoughts,
 Can scarce yourselves sustain, too prompt to tears,
 Let me at least weep with ye. Nature, here
 Ends her divine descent. Henceforth it is God
 Claims all things, and reclaims. And can it be,
 That all this vast and visible scheme of things,
 Set in light's golden frame, no more shall eye
 View ? Mountain ; streamlet swiftening to the deep ;
 Sward, flower besprent ; wind-haunted forest ; plain
 Fruit-laden ; all gone ? Shall nevermore that peak
 With stern uplifted finger threatful, check
 The outgoing storm, and bring it to his feet,
 Effusive ? Nor yon grim glacier where it creeps
 Wrinkled and rigid, as snake half frozen, e'er burst,
 At streamy touch of the all-transfiguring sun,
 Its icy enchantment, nor its patient hope
 Yet gain, of all its race this only, balked ?
 Shall no to-morrow be ? Shall the fair moon,
 Her starry stations nightly accomplishing,
 Threading in wavy orbit every sign,
 Wax ne'er again ; like us, safe housed within
 The mansions of the immutable ?

FESTUS.

All souls,

One grand, one worldwide trial passed, shall glide

Into eternity as the awakening earth
 Rounds towards the day re-risen. Our Lord, even now,
 With knowledge fills of passed things and to come
 The spirit by him forechosen ; and as in cave
 Caucasian, priest hereditary, tribe-led
 At old year's end, thrice pacing the emerald walls
 Those mystic offerings, none but he may, makes ?
 From off the central altar, rock-squared, lifts
 The chalice golden chased, with drowsiest juice
 Of bearded grain creaming, and from its hue,
 Clear or beclouded ; troublous or stirless state ;
 And savour sweet or acrid, to those round
 Of time's forth-issuing seasons much divines,
 Peace, life and plenty, dearth or death or war ;—
 So me hath God installed, from time's full cup,
 At eve of earth's great year, to announce to man
 Grief gone, pain passed, the day of general joy
 And,—war, the world's worst curse rehomed in hell,—
 The age of peace perennial.

CLARA. Earth, as though
 In forefeast of delight, and dimly limned
 Grandeurs to come, looks wistful of a change
 Brightening, dawnlike, man's mind, new-moralled.

FESTUS. Dream
 Of perfectness too soon, alas ! to cease.
 But better thus than as of old, when earth
 Despairing lay, war-gored, by ignorance base
 Blinded, and crushed by weight of despot crowns,
 Piled on her panting bosom. Await thine hour,
 Hopefully, earth. Peace, victress peace draws nigh.
 The secret longings of the wise, deep based
 On perfectness, fast ripening, leave joy's heart
 Beggared of blessings not all heavenly. And now
 Thrill with the audible advent of their fate,
 Fate predetermined good, all lands ; his boon
 Last, loftiest, best, who all founds.

CLARA. Ere the worlds,
 Light was : ere light night ever-being, pierced
 After by sun-stars ; and world, light, and night
 Spring up and cease, while God's word but matures.

FESTUS. Grinding the road of doom on worldlike wheels,
 Time's coming coursers, day and night, I hear
 Whirling the car of destiny. It comes.
 The clouded dust of ages marks its track ;
 Now, lost in depths of space ; a moment, mobbed
 By noisy nations ; now again, it hurls
 All hindrance from its path. The gates of force,
 The bars of hate and prejudice, in vain
 Oppose. It thunders to my feet. Time's lord,
 The sun, long sunk, that sober legacy
 Of light he left the hour spent, too, night warns us
 Hence.

CLARA. And I feel, with all these failing flowers,
Consentful. Nature hath to all things given
Her silent signal. Earth her thought-racked brow,
Racked to provide for all she is doomed to bear,
Pillows at God's feet ; and to his diligent guard,
Her slumbering spirit commends.

FESTUS. We ours to him,
Like confident, as not cherished less, less watched,
At day's dawn, sun crowned noon, or eve. Me leaving
Somewhile, go, sacred consort of my soul ;
This coring deepliest in thine heart ; that they
Who love, know God, to his their wills conform
As mists to mountains, and, like one long trained
In loyal suit to nature, who forehears
In clouds the ripple of rills, as yet ærial
Which shall make glad the meads ; who views in stars
The adoring awe their light shall sometime win
In eyes of unborn ages ; so souls foregraced
By like gifts to conceive all scope of good
Heaven prophesies fulfilled, not only God
Indwell, but here participant of the joy
He in them feels, shall, dying, ever live !

CLARA. May we so live we dread not here to die ;
So die, we dread not afterward to live !

FESTUS. Now heaven be thanked, man's end henceforth can
man

Calmly construe, note hopefully ; and, seen,
Exist, at least, not miserably ; our God,
By dread experience, known, of Hadëan realms,
No more, as falsest once to impious thought,
Unjustest of all beings ; indeed most just.
Yes, now I can behold the world nor breathe
The life-long sigh that I or any live ;
That souls whose sins minute hell's fiery light
Taxed to make legible even in God's broad eye,
Should, cursing and accursed, their Maker's shame,
Live, deathless, inameliorable. Thank God !
God's realm hath no such scandal ; boundless space
Hides no such horrible blot on nature's end ;
A figment, which, if true, God were not God,
Man, man, nor fiend their enemy. As one
Who at ebb of tide, by treacherous underdraught
Sucked seawards, stealthily, tossed here, tossed there,
In death-play of the brutal surge, ere yet,
At turn, hurled landwards scornfully, wave on wave,
Each strenuously intending doom,—the foam,
Wide-spreading as his watery winding-sheet,
Eyes round him ; and beyond, the infinite
Upper and lower, sees, of main and sky,
All pitilessly conclusive of his end ;
And knows the elements oathed against him ; knows
Nought with him, God except, and hope ; at last,

Battling no more with breakers, even for breath,
 Feels, as his feet insensitive drop, the sand,—
 Friend unsuspect, unconscious, unbeheld,—
 And with his heart's last life-beat, lifts again
 His head from burying billows,—lifts, and lives ;
 As one who toiling up the burning slope,
 High pitched, of cone volcanic, soon to outpour,
 Dread prelibation of earth's end, red floods
 Fuellous, of lava, in God's cup of wrath
 Slow brimming, till the ebullient dross, league-high,
 Shoots up, hell spilling ;—scorched by sun-fires ; parched
 By fumes sulphureous from above, by heat
 Subterrene stifled ; now, by stony showers,
 Glead-hot, imperilled, now by hissing streams
 Of seething ore,—swoons, falls : but, once restored,
 And, wistfulness returned, the healing ice
 Loosed from his feverous forehead, as from crag
 In spring, fall winter's snows,—conceives, towards God,
 The rebegetter of his future, thanks
 Such, and so vast, as might a nation feel,
 From famine saved, or pest ; so I, from sense
 Of hell, mistaught by merciless ages passed,
 Reproachful against God, the infinite love,
 As scourging soul with self-perpetuate woe,
 Firefloods eruptive of wrath endless, freed ;
 And knowing all things spiritual bettering aye,
 Perfecting, growing worthier of God's thought,
 Ever, by even disciplinary pains,
 Can look now on the world if not with joy,
 With trust of ultimate peace ; so much hath search
 Of truth, faith lowly but firm, and meditative
 Perfection, profited me, as this to know ;
 That not till freed from soul-seductive cares
 The longing for mere knowledge, greed of power,
 Luxury, the world, and all its nothings, lures
 To lead astray, I have lived to spurn or shun,
 Can soul, by such disoriented, recur
 To union with the Onemost spirit ; nor e'er
 Till all men's broken faiths remassed in one,
 God's unity end, and man's vast brotherhood
 Spread peaceful o'er the earth shall all partake
 Faith's universal headship ; war thenceforth,
 Sacred or sæcular, ceased for aye. For know,
 While leonine tribes, which, desert-shrined, deem God
 One sole : and while the art-loving races seized
 With sense of deity through all things diffused,
 And conscious of more complicated life,
 Trace him, through nature's myriad-sided whole,
 Trine-wise, or manifold, simple faith at last
 Names the All-one ; shows earth's all various creeds,
 True in time's partial views each, in the eterne
 One verity, same and whole. This truth to me

Blessed, who have visited all earth's holiest shrines,
 And by alien ritual undeterred, have joined
 My spirit in worship at all sacred feasts
 Saying, God be hallowed here as allwhere, only ;
 Soul of the world ! Source of all good, and end,
 Teach us true worshippers to be,
 Spirit in spirit, Lord ! of thee ;
 Our soul's just judge, lover and lord of truth.
 Men's piety reverencing in all earth's creeds,
 In every sanctuary, his praise with prayer,
 Parents of peace, I have found. To all who him
 Love truly, and spiritually adore, he grants
 Like favour, like delight. Nor needs for this
 So perfect commune, one revealing word
 Soulwards, the spirit of God divinely dumb.
 But as when, long winter passed, his fibrous veins
 Stiff and contract with stormy cold, some oak,
 Hallowed by patriot legend, and with birth
 Of world-feared realm coëval, feels, one morn,
 His tender leaflets budding in the breeze,
 And loosening in the light ; hears himself breathe,
 With self-felicitant murmur ; waves his boughs
 Towards every casual wing in welcome ; laughs
 To know himself alive ; his gay, old heart,
 Tingling 'neath spring's regenerative touch,
 Swells with the sense already of worshipping praise
 He through his shade shall reap from beasts and men,
 Stretched grateful, at his huge roots, there to enjoy
 Life's natural sacrament of rest ; while round
 His leafy tent prowl summer heats, in vain
 Ravening ; so, I, faith's festive light refound,
 Live fourfold, and in this my soul, beyond
 All world-force, feeling th' elements of heaven
 Struggle for loftier and more perfect life,
 Like-natured with the infinite, joy with joy
 Speechless, as earth, when she God's smile returns.

CLARA. But even if all mysterious rites thou hast learned,
 The spirit's probation, and just progress ; still,
 Till pride of knowledge in the humility ends
 Of wisdom ; and all proud desires of power
 In righteous service manwards, and to God,
 Thou hast learned nought, and lived in vain.

FESTUS.

I am one

Contented with his call, who knows the world
 Progresses just as heretofore, by wrongs
 Much, and by rights a little ; who, possessed
 By absolute indifference to the run
 Of fortune's and the world's blind turmoil, waits
 His destined task, as mariner late storm-tossed,
 By his beached boat stretched, swarthening in the sun,
 Lists the quick creeping flood. I seem to have passed
 All world-life, all desire. My blood fulfils

Its orbit as the stars their round in heaven
 With a cool constancy even I admire.
 What would my monitress? For the soul to have passed
 Passion and doubt, twin helps, twin foes, and trust
 Illimitably in God, who builds his heaven
 On love, the life-link between himself and man;
 And our immortal know the interior arc
 Of his more vast eternal, seems true life,
 Nor all unworthy of high intelligence;—
 Which life attained the aspiring spirit shall find
 Unselfish virtue's meed; the rational joy
 And satisfaction just, to us accruing,
 Of spiritual holiness which to us outsprings
 Direct and radius-like from God's own heart,
 Eternal therefore; and the gracious boon
 Of infinite amendment fixed by God
 On all free spirit though peccant, surely at last
 Amenable, as imperfect, narrow, dark,
 To suasions of the infinite perfect light;
 Thence penitent and progressive; yes, to know
 Him, th' universal being, in time deployed
 Through forms innumerable, the all lifeful stars,
 Globules that float through his galactic veins,
 And yon spherebounding sea, the shimmering fringe
 Of his broad skirts world-spangled, spread o'er space;
 One self-evolving essence which all things
 O'errules and underlies; the source eterne
 Of all conceptive nature; to mere life
 Life elemental, with the permanent flow
 Of streams, and virtual immortality
 Of mountains; to earth's annual growth the sense
 Adding of animate instinct; but in man
 Self-knowledge of the whole, its parts, plan, end,
 Its author, and his own, whose advent here
 Flesh hallows; in whose consciousness of sin,
 And the ill, the imperfect, the inadequate
 Attempts we make to realize truth and good,
 Our finite thwarts the Infinite; and makes
 The natural cross both suffer; but whose death,
 When soul that's bound on earth is loosed in heaven,
 Shows us the reascendant god, is life
 Eternal, life celestial, life divine.

CLARA. May such be ours!

FESTUS.

Oh, may it! To me thy life
 Redeems a long sad passed, and fills with sense
 Of joy unutterable the brief to come.
 As a fountain which from Andean heights art-led
 Into palatial gardens, massed with flowers,
 Though far beguiled and long repressed, jets up
 At last columnar, seeming so to express
 Its own and nature's innocent glee; nor can,
 Though of all rills simplest, secretest, conceal

Pre-eminency of source, but, 'gainst its will,
 Itself encrowns with soft and scintillant snows
 Of night-starred silence vindicative, and coy,
 And colourless perfection of pure life,
 Such as earth owns, heaven neighbouring ; thus too, thou
 To me, sweet, come, reanimatest the world
 Howbeit not of thine element ; and the soul,
 With recollection of celestial things
 Serenest, only impartible from on high.

 XLIII.

Not in one plane indeviabie the soul
 Makes way, but moonlike waveringly, as though
 Not to advance content for a time, the while
 Urged by interior fate to compass heaven
 Pauseless, the spirit's instruction still proceeds,
 And God's original end itself fulfils.
 Hallowed by promise given, faith's prayer the will
 Strengthening to adventure for earth's weal, earth's peace,
 Through mouth of kindest angel, and by sign
 Of saints celestial, God sends tidings down.
 Of soul's acceptance sealed ; Himself to man,
 So far as finite can contain, imparts
 This wise, the infinite of his presence ; one
 In verity, mortal soul with soul eterne.

A lonely Lodge among the Snowy Mountains.

FESTUS alone ; afterwards GUARDIAN ANGEL.

FESTUS. I feel as if I could devour the days
 Till the time come when I shall gain mine end ;
 God shall have made me ruler, and all worlds
 Signed the sublime recognizance. Till then,
 Even as a boat lies rocking on the beach,
 Waiting the one white wave to float it free,
 Wait I the great event ;—too great it seems.
 Yet, Lord ! thou knowest the power I seek for sought
 For man's good and thy glory, and its desire
 By thee inspired. As I use it use thou me.
 Thou hast said that such I shall enjoy, and then,
 My mission and thine ends accomplished, here,
 I seek a world where souls begin again,
 Or life take up from where death broke it at.
 Like disproportion there 'tween will and power
 As here, may not be. If not, I shall be happy.
 I feel no bounds. I cannot think but thought
 On thought springs up, illimitably, around,
 As a great forest sows itself ; but here

There is nor ground nor light enough to live.
 Sealike, I would be everywhere at once ;
 And, sensible of the natural competence
 To outspread my spirit o'er all the endless world,
 Would act at all points. Bound to one, I feel ;
 So poor mere place is, with ubiquity weighed,
 As wellnigh nowhere. Sense, flesh, feeling, fail
 Before the imperious mind's feet as the dust
 She treads, windlike lifts up and leaves behind.
 How mind will act with body glorified
 And spiritualized, and senses fined,
 And pointed brilliantwise, we know not. Here,
 Even, it may be wrong in us to deem
 The senses' degradations, otherwise
 Than as fine steps, whereby the queenly soul
 Comes down from her bright throne to view the mass
 She hath dominion over, and the things
 Of her inheritance ; and reascends,
 With an indignant fiery purity,
 Not to be touched, her seat. The visible world,
 Whereby God maketh nature known to us,
 Is not derogatory unto himself,
 As the pure Spirit Infinite. A world
 Is but, perhaps, a sense of God's whereby
 He may explain his nature, and receive
 Fit pleasure. But the hour is hard at hand,
 When time's gray wing shall winnow all away,
 Heaven's stars, earth's atoms : when Creator mind
 And mind create shall know each other ; worlds,
 Bodies, put off, and man his Maker meet
 Where all, who through the universe do well,
 Embrace their hearts' desire ; what things they will
 And whom remember ; live, too, where they list ;
 And with the beings they love best, and God,
 Inherit and inhabit boundless bliss.
 Hear me, all-favouring God ! my latest prayer ;
 Thou unto whom all nations of the world
 Lift up their hearts, like grass-blades to the sun ;
 Who all things hast, save need of aught ; who hast given me
 Earth and her all ; give from thy garner stored
 With good, some sign Lord now in proof to earth
 My prayers are with thee ; that they rend the clouds,
 And, rising through the sightless dark of space,
 Reach to thy central throne. Oh ! let me feel,
 What was my constant dream in my young years,
 And is in all my better moments now,—
 My hope, my faith, my nature's sum and end,
 Oneness with thee and heaven. Lord ! make me sure
 My soul already is in unison
 With the triumphant. Ah ! I surely hear
 The voices of the spirits of the saints,
 And witnesses to the redeeming truth ;

Not, as of old, in scanty scattered strains,
 Breathed from the caves of earth and cells of cities,—
 Nor as the voice of martyr choked with fire,—
 But in one solemn hymn of joy as when
 From the bright walls of the heavenly city they
 Looked on the war of hell, host upon host,
 Foiled by God's single sword before their gates
 Of perfect pearl ;—nearer and nearer now !
 This is the sign, O God ! which thou hast given,
 And I will praise thee through eternity.

SAINTS FROM HEAVEN.

Call all who love thee, Lord ! to thee,
 Thou knowest how they long
 To leave these broken lays, and aid
 In heaven's unceasing song ;
 How they long, Lord ! to go to thee,
 And hail thee with their eyes,—
 Thee in thy blessedness, and all
 The nations of the skies ;

All who have loved thee and done well,
 Of every age, creed, clime ;
 The host of saved ones from the ends
 And all the worlds of time :
 The wise in matter and in mind,
 The soldier, sage, and priest ;
 King, prophet, hero, saint, and bard,
 The greatest soul and least ;

The old and young and very babe,
 The maiden and the youth,
 All re-born angels of one age—
 The age of heaven and truth ;
 The rich, the poor, the good, the bad,
 Redeemed alike from sin ;
 Lord ! close the book of time, and let
 Eternity begin.

FESTUS. Will ye away, ye blessed ? To God I then
 Commend ye, and my soul with yours ; and 'midst
 The light ye live in, oh ! mind ye of the days
 Sunless, and starless nights, myriads on earth
 Pass without faith's one ray, and pray for those
 Who in the world's dark womb bound, know not yet,
 Through indifference, ignorance, or disbelief,
 Their sire, God. Lord of all earth, all worlds, all heavens,
 Lift up to thine my spirit ; let me so share
 The comfort of thy love, that while ordained
 To my great task, no more misgivings, fears,
 Nor mortal doubts, the soul chill, thou by thy love
 Hast hallowed, and so made like molten gold
 The mould that holds it precious ; or for thine
 Own ends, if such thou suffer, may they pass
 Quickly and traceless, perish ; all thoughts of earth
 All deathpangs too o'ercome, may I with thy chosen
 Seraphs and saints, and all-possessing souls,
 Which minister through the universe, to thee,

Enthroned in spirit's intensest bliss, succeed
To heaven for ever.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Hear, mortal, and believe.
The soul once saved shall never cease from bliss.
She doth not sin. The deeds which look like sin,
The flesh and the false world, are all to her
Hallowed and glorified. The world is changed.
She hath a resurrection unto God,
While in the flesh, before the final one,
And is with God. Her state shall never fail.
Even the molten granite which hath split
Mountains, and lieth now like curdled blood
In marble veins, shall flow again when comes
The heat which is to end all ; when the air
Is as a ravening fire, and what at first
Produced, at last consumeth ; but the soul
Redeemed is dear to God as his own throne,
And shall no sooner perish. Harken, man !
Wilt thou distrust God ?

FESTUS. God I ne'er distrust.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Perchance his dooms perplex thee ; thou
wouldst know

Why this, why that, were ta'en. If that, by charm
Of world-lore and all mysteries abstruse,
Art's secular sanctities and accomplishments,
Would have divert thy heart, thy life absorbed
As fain she would, to her own ends : if this,
Of sway ambitious, had foreurged the arm
Of empire, ere among men's minds the need
And good of universal peace became
Compeer, in thine, of conscience purified
And life sublimed and hallowed ; had life's friend,
Though cordial and sincere, infected thine
With his soul's selfish purports, love of power,
Wealth, knowledge, state and rule for any good
Narrower than all thy kind's ; the stars had stopped
Their sacred march. All fates are in God's hand ;
And whether by their own presumption, pride,
Passion or ignorance, this or that one cease,
Perish, man knows not, angel knows not. All
Know it is just. Doubt thou on doubt no more.
Prepare then for the power and lot most high
Whereto the Lord hath called thee. He hath heard
The prayers thou hast now besought him with, heart-strained,
And bids me tell thee, shrink not, doubt not. He
Will comfort and uphold thee at the end.

FESTUS. Thou art mine angel guard ! I recognize,
In every holy feature of thy face,
The instigated thoughts of heaven which oft
In my world wanderings blessed me ; in thy touch,
The virtuous resolution ; in thy voice,
The warning and foreknowledge unexplained,

Not unesteemed, prompting to do or shun ;
And in thy smile joy total and supreme.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. But death's eternal secret all must hear.

FESTUS. I fear, I fear this miracle of death
Is something terrible.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Where faith were not
In God's all-moulding hand, such fear were well.
As when aerial voyager—in car
Strung pensile 'neath some huge and gaseous globe,
That but by loftier levity attains
Life's limit, upwards eyes the Infinite,
Formless and vast as deity ; then, while through
His mind, himself a wind-steered atom—pass
Inexplicable thoughts and doubts sublime,
And troublous forecast of his travel's end,
Pores, wistful, downwards on the sea of clouds,
Peaked far below his feet in billowy hills,
Sea over sea, whose vaporous baptism he
Must plunge through, ere he sets where fortune lists,
Or tyrant gusts decree ; so 'twixt all truth
And death, the uncertain soul, sustained alone
By its own insubstantive power, less free
Than mutable, sees no safety in its course,
Nor fixed goal afar. But, soul-assured,
Rests on the rock-foundations of God's word ;
Nor brooks the awful liberty to doubt.

FESTUS. My soul feels firmer ; fitter for the end,
Too soon, come when it will. But while life lasts
This holy mystery of incertitude,
Lawed of God, doubtless, to some good, rules all.
As when from some broad bluff where rival winds,
Hold haughty revelry, by night we see
The lurid lights of a huge city lie
Below, like an abyss of fallen stars,
Marked dully from those heavenly ones, and feel
The storm and stress of transit, though subdued,
And as with deadened thunder, still the ear,
More than day's roar and the tempestuous tides
Of social strife : so, calling back our years,
We note where youth's bright aspirations soar
O'er life's dim actions ; how, too, as we age,
Life's recollections more than present deeds
Or hopes, mind's courts judicial crowd ; while there,
Still, by her balance, sits everlasting doubt
Poising and pondering all things. But to God,
Go angel, and declare that I repent
Of all misdeeds ; that but for his own grace
I should repent of my whole life ; that on
That grace, which now hath sanctified the whole,
I trust for all the rest of it, and then
For ever ; that I am prepared to act
And suffer as he bids, and in all things

To do his will rejoicing.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. It is done.

FESTUS. Oh ! I repent me of a thousand sins,
In number as the breaths which I have breathed.
Am I forgiven ?

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Child of God, thou art.
It is God prompts, inspires, and answers prayer ;
Nought for sin, save repentance here, avails.
And none can truly worship but who have
The earnest of their glory from on high,
God's nature in them. It is the love of God
The extatic sense of oneness with all things,
And special worship towards himself that thrills
Through life's self-conscious chord, vibrant in him,
Harmonious with the universe, which makes
Our sole fit claim to being immortal ; that
Wanting nor willing, the world cannot worship.
And whether the lip speak, or in inspired
Silence, we clasp our hearts as a shut book
Of song unsung, the silence and the speech
Is each his ; and as coming from and going
To him, is worthy of him and his love.
Prayer is the spirit speaking truth to truth ;
The expiration of the thing inspired.
Above the battling rock-storm of this world
Lies heaven's great calm, through which as through a bell,
Tolleth the tongue of God eternally,
Calling to worship. Whoso hears that tongue
Worships. The spirit enters with the sound,
Preaching the one and universal word,
The God word, which is spirit, life, and light ;
The written word to one race, the unwrit
Revelment to the thousand peopled world.
The ear which hears is preattuned in heaven,
The eye which sees prevision hath ere birth.
But the just future shall to many give,
Gifts which the partial present doles to few ;
To all the glory of obeying God.

FESTUS. The knowledge of God is the wisdom of man—
This is the end of being, wisdom ; this
Of wisdom, action ; and of action, rest ;
And of rest, bliss ; that by experience sage
Of good and ill, the diametric powers
Which thwart the world, the thrice-born might discern,
With the undeflected spirit pure from heaven,
That he who makes, unbuilding, saves the whole ;
In wisdom's holy spirit all renewed.
To know this, is to read the runes of old,
Wrought in the time-outlasting rock ; to see
Unblinded in the heart of light ; to feel
Keen through the soul, the same essential strain,
Which vivifies the clear and fire-eyed stars,

Still harping their serene and silvery spell
 In the perpetual presence of the skies,
 And of the world-cored calm, where silence sits
 In secret light all hidden ; this to know—
 Brings down the fiery unction from on high,
 Chrism spiritual of heaven's eternal sun,
 Which hallows and ordains the regnant soul ;
 Transmutes the splendid fluid of the frame
 Into a fountain of divine delight,
 And renovative nature ;—shows us earth,
 One with the great galactic line of life
 Which parts the hemispherical palm of heaven ;
 This with all spheres of being makes concord
 As at the first creation, in that peace,
 Earth's hope, heaven's joy, the choice of the elect,
 Life's grace, God's blessing. And as time's vesper hymn
 The starry matins of eternity
 Precedes, and dawn of being in the new heavens,
 To know this, is to know we shall depart
 Into the storm-surrounding calm on high,
 The sacred cirque, the all-central infinite,
 Of that self-blessedness wherein abides
 Our God, all kind, all loving, all beloved ;—
 To feel life one great ritual, and its laws,
 Writ in the vital rubric of the blood,
 Flow in obedience, and flow out command,
 In sea-like circulation ; and be here
 Accepted as a gift by him who gives
 An empire as an alms, nor counts it aught,
 So long as all his creatures joy in him,
 The great Rejoicer of the universe,
 Whom all the boundless spheres of being bless.

ANGEL. I go. Thy God is with thee. We shall meet
 Ere long, no more to part.

FESTUS. Hear, angel-guard !
 Hie thee to heaven, and say in man's behalf,
 Perfect as creatural limits will let be,
 All aptnesses of heaven and earth complete,
 All being's best aims accomplished, God's and man's,
 Truth, union, peace, society's triple crown
 Secured, 'twere well, ere fall befall, earth cease.
 I have chosen ; and all the ambitious hopes of life,
 Proud schemes of power prolonged ; huge length of days ;
 And all that secret wisdom toiled to achieve
 One hour shall wreck.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. It is best for all. Farewell !
 FESTUS. It is sweet to feel we are encircled here,
 By breath of angels as the stars by heaven ;
 And the soul's own relations, all divine,
 As kind as even those of blood ; and thus,
 While friends and kin, like Saturn's double rings,
 Cheer us along our orbit, we may feel

We are not lone in life, but that earth's part
 Of heaven and all things. Left now lonely here,
 Like a gray gaunt menhir by the all-wasting sea,
 The solitude impersonate, nature's ebb
 Surviving, let me my life o'erlook. I see,
 Not inconspicuous, hence : an islet fair
 Fertile ; with waste spots ; washed by death's wide main,
 All streams of life emotional gulphing ; skyed
 By boundless thought ; and, albeit sunned by faith,
 And heavenly love, sin-clouded ; passion swept
 As though the nest of storms ; ribbed through by chains
 Of mountain acts ; immoveable shackles these ;
 No subtlest sophist can dislink ; no priest
 Pretentious loose ; no angel bid fall off.
 Acts are for ever. Thoughts, like dreamclouds, come
 Unbidden, and go ; nay, oft 'neath reason's ray
 Evaporate, cease, unknown to the heart or God.
 But deeds die not ; though trodden below the ground
 They seed for ever. Yet the coming clears ;
 The chaos of uncertainties, the storm-fires
 Of thought-search, feeling, I have passed through, henceforth
 By force of fate foregone, though scarcely now,
 Shadows to me, of truth, life sure—no more
 Vex ; nor, dragged captive, groan I, where'er doubt
 Skins in his fugitive tents, pitched here, pitched there ;
 But the well-built walls of castled certainty
 Me, voluntary, detain, faith's guest, faith's friend
 Undauntable, dreadless of all siege ; nor awed
 Of the twinned strife, waged ere the birth of things,
 Of freedom against fate, mere liberty,
 The inferior marking ; spirit more high, the stress
 Of virtue's laws, and reason's despotry ;
 Until through every range is reached the soul
 In whose great essence fate with freedom ones.
 Called by his sovereign mandate thus to reign
 In earth and death beyond, my spirit, as air
 No arrow wounds, passive to every hest
 The All-sire sends forth, abides. Are God's ways now
 Less marvellous than of old, with men ? Lacks one
 Due witness in his own considerate heart,
 Of impulse, guidance, warning, sway divine ?
 All things controlling to concerted ends
 Material or of mind ? Through what dim paths,
 Unconscious seemingly of all approach
 Truthwards, I have trode ; how secret wisdom's ways ;
 And through what mazy discipline at last,
 In thought's free centre summed and ended, I
 Soul perfected am come. How things despised
 Once ignorantly, have since in life's complete,
 But graduated evolvment, gained just power,
 True trust and dignity. How the spirit, cleared
 From every doubt,—the black o'erbelted clouds

Of mystery rounding the orb'd world, is now
 To faith, pure simple life, and conscious joy
 Of being with deity concentrate, returned.
 See love and knowledge, superficial tests,
 Though once deemed satisfying, now proved but means
 Soul perfective for heavenlier ends. Command,
 Life's crowning proof I feel, if or towards self,
 Or man's good bent. And this now nerves me, I
 Obedient though reluctant, armed for fight,
 By faithful love, wisdom divine, and meek
 Philosophy, whose broad and rational fan,
 All doctrine winnowing, windlike leaves truth sole,
 The vital seed of science ; with such food
 Celestial, the sense quickening that nought bars
 Man's conscience from commune divine, and heaven's
 Own inspiration ; she, life's guard and guide,
 From creeds opposed, like verities draws ; annuls
 All rancour ; mediatizes the proud points
 Of old and worldwide worships, and declares,
 As every faith begins and ends in God,
 The virtual spirit of all, love ; earth-life, rite
 Initiative to life divine. Man's heart,
 So bettered in its aims shall yet with all
 In heaven beat tunably. Pursuits, desires,
 Affections, passions which once specious made
 Existence and experience seeming sage,
 Paled 'fore death's breathless stride shall cease, and leave
 Rapt union only with the eternal mind
 And concourse with its ends. For, once approved
 The illusoriness of things, the barrenness
 Of knowledge, and occupation ; the unworth
 Life's solid-seeming bubble infilms, the cares,
 The needs which here disfigure time, the wrongs
 Society most in virtue's name enacts,
 Maugre the prime decrees staunch conscience owns
 Heaven sown, innate ; man spiritually framed
 Upon the scale of gods, with broods of stars
 Coæval, vast in years, perfectible even
 To the mid point where mixed humanity blends
 With pure divinity and parental, views,
 In God's unbounded and immediate being,
 All secondary existence reunite ;
 By beauty of purity drawn ; by holiness
 Of thought and godliest love of love supreme ;
 All hopes amassed, all ends concentrate there.
 To know the truth of God, by none without
 His special love known ; in accord to act
 With sanctified intelligences that rule,
 Each, as the finger of God, a world ; to feel
 Heart and mind one, with all we rule or serve ;
 Mind, everywhere like-motived, passioned ; ours
 Toned all to endure, but hopeful of things best,

As ultimately and only bound to be ;
 To know each new conception gained of God's
 All blessing nature, proof of commune pure
 With deity, and of his divine embrace ;
 Makes the round good I have longed for, and by grace
 God, now, such capabilities perfected, grants.
 Come then, the end at once. Nay, wherefore not ?
 Content with recognition just from spirits
 Of orders highest, selectest round me,—even
 As when Jove's prosperous star, upclimbing slow
 Behind some hill-based city, obscured at first
 By urban exhalations, and confused
 With earthlier luminaries, draws soon, serene
 Towards the upper rooms of space, and the bays bridging,
 And flat wide wastes of wet and weedy sand ;
 With beamy path, shows plainly planetwise,
 Through grandeur of patience, and the ascent to heights
 More and more pure continually, by hosts
 Fraternal, in bright conclave welcomed, there
 With them heaven's arch to tread, and the rare blue air
 Respire, of immortality, let my soul,
 By fate and faith empowered all eminence here
 To o'erpass ; misjudgment's fog cleared, and rank mists
 Of slander : passion's cloud-scud, and all fires
 Fatuous or vaporous, ignorant praise ill rates
 As lights perennial, henceforth of this high end
 Assured, and state celestial, life's last aim
 And holiest duty, God to obey, fulfil.
 The world's precipitate opposition changed
 To tolerant acquiescence, man's whole strength
 May still need marshalling 'gainst destruction's ranks ;
 Should these contest the world-realm yet, or those
 Their Lord's disposal of time's ultimate gifts
 Defy, and power's supreme arrangements. Hence
 I live but in the future ; earth in me
 Breathes only, and in my choice ; choice, heaven-approved
 Too long perhaps withdrawn, too glad to escape
 Once the o'ermastering world, my solitude,
 Myself, it is now for me to quit, and life's
 Opposing interests, influences, contemned,
 Work out for all a freer, worthier fate.
 As one on coast half cave, half crag, but caught
 By tempest, savage breast-room finds, and peace,
 In the sudden silence of a rocky rift,
 Nought visible thence but storm of foam-flakes floating
 Before its mouth like wild words, from white lips
 Wrung reckless, desperate tossed ; save roar of sea
 Nought heard, and his own, his hurried breathing ;—awed
 By the sensible stillness round him of all else,
 And vague unreasoning fears lest thunders thrice
 Reverberant smote, should casually unloose
 The natural vault-work o'er his head, and make

Safer to face, without, the hurricane drift
 Rock shivering, than abide in that grim cell
 Its calm, so deathful possibly ; tides the while
 Mounting, night falling, his now dread retreat
 By lightning searched, he at last from his niche burst forth,
 Braves resolute, all ; so I, long periods passed,
 Of dolorous exile and seclusion, seek
 Through the tempestuous clash of human wills,
 And general hate, save of the good and wise,
 Mightier than others, or themselves deem, earth's,
 Mine own, and man's convergent destinies.

XLIV.

Union of God with nature, man their son
 Hymns ; and Heaven thanking for all earthly good
 Perfected in humanity, with his bride
 Sibylline, he, as prophet bards of old,
 Their morn and noontide service, chants, alterne
 Earth's evensong, earth's vespers, night at hand.
 Hope of the wise and good through time, the world
 Shown bettered, but by virtue's noblest plans
 Thought out of genius, and through patient aid
 Of brethren, saintliest lovers of their kind,
 So patent made, the holy and sage at last,
 For their best aims and worthiest deeds dare hope
 God's sanction. Still, let nature grieve, as wont ;
 Man, woman, angel weep earth's coming end ;
 End that so chosen shall show earth's final race
 Still parted ; these self-ranged to serve God's will ;
 These contrary, their own ends ; fate still, by death
 Not, as ill deemed, unalterable. God just,
 God kind, accepts all penitence, at all times.

*Garden Terrace, by the Sea ; Cliff and Wood near ; Town
 in distance.*

FESTUS and CLARA.

FESTUS. O days of heaven and earth, when all things seem
 Perfection, issuant from some central soul
 Whose life all love, all happiness, transfused
 Through being we share, and in humane degree
 Enjoy, nay more enhance ; for man's delight
 In virtue and holy thought redounds to God's.
 And as heaven's calm immense, intense, the wind
 Ceaselessly operative pervades, and so
 Faintly to us, God's mode of being conveys
 And action spiritual, we too the more
 By deed of mind we range the world, and rise

To thought serene celestial, and devote
 Our spirits to inmost commune with his works ;
 In him our source confessed, our base in them ;
 Knowing the duties, destinies of souls ,
 Self-charged their wellbeing to promote, and train
 The immortal up towards deity, so far
 Do we God's work, and bear the stamp divine
 Of perfectness, progression. To perceive
 Our oneness with the universe, and feel
 The joyous mystery which each special life
 Binds to the conscious infinite immasked
 In its own creations, brings the intuitive soul
 Such fine delight as simple gods of old
 Pleased cheaply, felt, who budged unseem the streets
 Of cities dedicate ; and beside some shrine
 Harkening their names invoked, and scenting myrrh
 Or nard, bewrayed their presence with a smile,
 Men took for playful lightnings, such as cast
 From Pallas' filial hand gleam wide,—but home
 Returned, find every prayer they had prayed fulfilled.
 The soul self satisfied of being which knows
 The absolute spirit and infinite ; on whose head
 Their holy hands the ages have imposed,
 Teeming with sevenfold boons ; who through himself
 Feels flow the vital and invisible force
 Which to its will compels all, but through all
 Makes harmony of its most tyrannous laws,
 Subjection grateful ; even in wild extremes,
 Beauty inevitable ; and,—though for a time
 Ill, like some arrogant cloud that blurs the sun,
 Through the wide welkin riot, at last good
 Predominant o'er all evil, in man's heart
 Mixed, as corruption serves to engender life
 For better ends, he, like flower sweets to the sun
 Light erst instilled, drawn Godwards, in whom souls
 Forelive first as in cause pretemporal, rests
 From toilful apprehension of the whole,
 In spirit sabbatic ; and the heavens and earth,
 And various nature's sympathetic life
 Each in their generations, hails divine.
 Somewhat to feel in common with all life
 Human, instinctive, vegetive, to trace
 One vital force through life, leaf, light ; the vast
 Of nature's powers and products, or her fair
 And delicate outgrowths ; river, mountain, main,
 Forest or floweret, gives the spirit access
 To God a thousand ways ; and so secures
 His favourable acceptance as we make
 Mention within our minds of all his good.
 On wild and heathery turf to bask, or cool
 Green sod of meads, or bloomy lawn where rose,
 Laurel and lily cluster, loam-born scents

With flowery incense mingling ; to recline
 Dreamy and passive to all influences
 Cloudlet and sun thrill through the sensitive breast,
 By rivulets elm o'erarched, and lulling lapse
 Of rippling wavelets glittering, and the oft
 Redimpled eddy slowly concurrent ; stretched
 'Neath blos'my trees, gaze through their silvery snow,
 On air's blue heights inviolable ; to scale
 Perilously some sheer browed cliff, that day's
 Salvation thenceforth ne'er forgot, or cling,
 Only not vanquished by the vindictive blast,
 Prone to the craggy nape of giant peak,
 Whence the rapt eye may crowd into its ball
 A visioned kingdom ; forth to steal at eve,
 Grave tryst to keep with tutelar stars, and trace
 Their prosperous walk through night ; or mark them rise
 Till, with their fair reflection 'midst the lake,
 They meet in tremulous joy ; cave-hidden to watch
 The moonlit cataract, sheeted like a ghost,
 Muttering in awful monotone its one
 Intelligible word of life ; to list
 Far off, the torrent's inarticulate roar
 Blend with the storm-wind through the wood, till both
 In those inaudible harmonies silence copes,
 Die ; to contest the strength of confluent streams ;
 The rushing rain to face, heaven's holy rite
 Of sprinkling, oft to priest at nature's shrine
 Serving, prelustrant ; to imbreast the gale
 Healthful, reanimative, the breath divine
 Of the great world spirit, that where he will,
 Blowing with aery baptism reimpregns
 With new life principles man's sacred frame ;
 Desert and savage shore to roam, all thought
 Feeling, strung tense by soleness, and the sense
 Of high equality with aught create ;
 Star-like, to haunt wastes spatial, where alone
 Mid clear aired wilds the sunfires purify
 And founts rock smitten of God, the spirit sincere,
 Insensible of limits, may grow to feel
 Like broad simplicity ; such delights may know
 Of sun, sea, hill, and bleak and wind-bleached waste,
 And silence superhuman of the skies,
 Apt to wise solitude as the drumming world
 Conceits not of, nor dreams, may learn to love
 Of very lonesomeness the elements,
 Our kingly kin tetrarchal, as the powers
 That start all shapes, and close ; uniting thus
 Things sensible and things animate in one realm,
 Our own heart's royalty ;—thus aye to live
 Part absolute of the world's essential cause,
 Free, arbitrary ; creative of all truth
 Conviction, mental impress ; in oneself

Enjoyer of the universe, co-mate
 With nature's eldest dignities, self ordained,
 Self consecrate, enthroned, is to regain
 Our birthright from us filched by the false world,
 Irreverent, mean ; our heart to re-immense
 In being's primal font ; our covenant faith
 With nature reaffirm, and so accept
 Absolvement by the eternal spirit from life's
 Vain toils and deadening trivialties ; renew
 Our soul's first sacrament, and take in God
 With mindful extasie to ourselves, and sense
 Of the world-bosoming deity, who all
 By reason made, in love sustains, and, just
 In judgment, all will bless ; 'tis to conceive
 By force of vital sympathies the whole ;
 And be, and act through all ; it is to feel
 Our spirits collateral flow with time's broad flood,
 Even as our heart's blood coursing aye, like pulsed
 With earth's unhesitant streams ; 'tis to possess
 Souls self adjusted to the whole round of things,
 The central life, the infinite. Man alone,
 Conscious alike of nature and of God,
 Brings both into communion ; sanctifies
 With sympathy the naked elements ;
 And—like the mediator he is, inspires,
 Appreciative of all his blessings here,
 That joy in God God's works enkindle in him.
 When thus by wisdom's clearsight he first views,
 With eye grown practised to the infinite,
 Whether on mount, mid desert, or withdrawn
 In chambered loneliness and studious calm,
 Those inner spheres wherein dwell goodness, truth ;
 Peace, love, the inborn sense of God ; and knows
 That God subsists in virtue and holiness,
 As in material forms the essential force
 Impalpable, yet there,—which underlies
 The common properties of things ; 'neath all
 Defect perfection ; soul-spheres these that rule,
 And mould this volatile world whose shows, that hour
 Lift themselves lightly off mistlike, we find
 Instamped through being's universal self,
 Proof of our prime conception there ; and here,
 To such as love humanity, divine
 Adoption ; and, life's loftiest end to come,
 A spirit regenerate, glorified, in full
 Concord with God and nature. Enter thou
 Therefore, into thyself ; be at one with God.
 Thus being, we truest live. To will what's just ;
 To love what's pure ; to seek man's peace as God's ;
 And aid his worthier aims ; to feed on truths
 Soul-liberating, supreme ; our daily choice
 Being such to assimilate, and to all commend

As gracious, saving, best, makes us in part
 Celestial, and in ours inhearts the faith
 Of everlasting being. Prophetic man
 Who can foreset the stars their stations ; winds
 Weigh ; and his own mind's virtues deify,
 A larger, freer, happier, holier life
 Shall lead than all the painful pietism
 Of peddling sects could compass. God's great dower
 To the accepted spirit of life eterne,
 Seems in excess no more when those he loves
 He with the fulness of perfection crowns,
 The gift of his own nature ; through the soul's
 System so working that it is he who us
 Capacitates to enjoy, and is himself
 The enjoyment he confers ; feast, host, guest, grace
 And blessing ; teaching that, with us, to strive
 For heaven is heaven ; to love God is to be,
 Ourselves, divine. For as yon space spanning bow,
 The miracle of a moment, which adorns
 And seems all things to comprehend, earth, sea
 And firmament made its debtors, proud to pay
 Their subsidy of admiring joy, its end
 Achieved, God's truth to certify, in the skies'
 Boundless and formless unity disappears ;
 So, arched an instant on the eternal disk
 Of life divine, man's soul,—embracing here
 This world-frame in itself, each, but for heaven,
 Baseless, incredible,—ceasing gradual, grows
 With its object one ; this death-conditioned life,
 These vari-coloured poms of transient time,
 These elements of existence dropped, whose end
 Is as was their beginning ; and assumed
 In plenitude of deity, and the immense
 Seclusion of his essence, reattains
 Identity with being still ours, once all.

CLARA. How deeply doubly dear are beauties seen
 Never enough, but now untimely lost.

FESTUS. It is this o'erglooms, o'erwhelms me. Life's best aims,
 Seclusion's studious joys, conceptive mind,
 Peopling the void with many a voice and shape
 Of truth impersonate, heeding not alone
 This day-wave on whose feathering ridge we ride,
 But the wild world of billows bound to break
 Yet on time's patient shore ; home's daily dues ;
 The converse spoken or writ of a choice friend ;
 Words winnowed well of sages of the light,
 Garnered in books, the elect of ages, crowned
 By man's depurate judgment, have so long
 Consoled me, so long made, still to me make,
 With the delightful talk of one I love,
 Society, and in rich exchange supplied,
 For the tumultuous trifling of the times,

And their puffed out inanities, a retreat
 Complacent, where the soul, of wisdom's charms
 Fired, may the shades of kingly sages guest,
 Earth's silver-shielded band of minds immortal,
 The livelong day,—listing them sadly enlarge
 On virtue and the good most high of life ;
 The passionless perfection of our race ;
 On being and becoming,—the eterne
 Entangled in the temporal,—reason, truth
 Essential, and divine fate ;—or, though fixed,
 Where fancy, palmer-wise, at will, may roam
 The faëry fields of fiction and romance,
 Alive with princely knights, queens, giants, churls ;
 Enchantresses steel castled, whose wan smiles
 Win realms, but too soon, at a breath, dissolved :—
 Or isles of song Elysian, trode by muse
 Rose crowned, new ditties lilting day by day ;—
 That I, thus privileged, dare not deem me all
 Unblessed, nor my Lord chide for good desired,
 Withholden ; rather, even as now, on life
 Passed, calmly ruminant, on the unmeasured tracts
 Of world-lore reaped ; and death deriding truths,
 Heaven-planted in man's soul, wrung by brave hand
 Guided of angels, from the stifling clutch
 Of unvarnished faiths, 'tween God and man
 Intrusive, but amended, sanctioned now
 By the hallowing spirit, his disentangling hand
 All life's knots smoothening, recognize ; nay, him
 More heartfully revere, who the free boon
 Of everlasting union, sharing here
 With whom he would, in arbitrary delight,
 All lesser gifts discards, with one more grand
 His favourites to consumm.

CLARA. Hours such as these
 To me, time's worthiest seem ; yes, when we die,
 Memory will bless those moments most in life
 We passed in worship, drinking in the breath
 Of the Great Spirit, who with his presence fills
 Impalpably, the whole ; but of whom the wise
 Only aware, a life co-apt, within
 His definite governance, live. Oh, I have felt
 At such times as my heart had wings ; nay, what
 Lacked, that we took not flight at once, for heaven ?

FESTUS. To know all these, life's purest, loftiest joys,
 Commensurate even with mind, death-doomed ; to feel
 Earth hourly fail, might sadden us,—gloried not
 Faith more in God's decree than man's desire.

CLARA. Yon sun, whose sea-set here, to happier globes
 Bodes light-birth ; yon faint crescent, in the sky
 Airily hovering, like to a spirit scarce 'scaped
 From death-pyres still aglow ; yon snow-piled peaks
 Clouds pearly o'erfilm ; all things invite, as though

Sun, magnify thy maker !

CLARA. Moon, whose gleam
Reflective, types the God-light, wherewith shines
Man's soul, lead thou, through each sabbatic change
That errant essence to One invariable ;
And, as some pilgrim maid, from shrine to shrine
Circling, insatiate of all sanctities,
Her resolute soul to expand with fullest faith,
And holiest memories ; teach us, light of night,
By thy superb procession through yon skies,
Mansioned with many a world of bliss, to enlarge
Our spirits with love of God, nor know of wane,
Save in the world's attraction ; so best serving
Our Lord and thine.

FESTUS. Twin spheres, perpetual rest
This showing, pauseless motion that, between
Whose fires, for purifying, the storied day,
The night, earth's star tipped shadow pass, and space,
World spangled, 'neath whose sensible folds, his garb,
The formless spirit within we trace ; your Lord
Attest, the eternal reason of the whole ;
Hidden in himself, self manifestive cause ;
Former of forms ; who, source and sum of life,
Bade being be ; and, from his boundless deeps
Of reason, drew law primitive and supreme.
Ye orbs, self moved, which, rounding with our own,
The infinite within, without, yourselves
Find nought but God, oh, shout aloud your proofs,
All heavens may hear ; and even the nebulous star,
Of pale, irresolute sheen, with fearful joy
Vibrant, conclude God is, our Lord, our Sire ;
Not chaos, chance, nor matter ; law inert,
Unconscious ; nor yourselves, contingent, weak,
Who might have been, as now, or not have been.
Chance hurled him prostrate in the dust when asked
The crucial question ; chaos cowed his head
In twice redoubled darkness, witting nought ;
Mute matter heard not ; no ! it was mind most skilled
All made by one omnific word ; all named
His children ; laid on every head his hand,
Whose radiant impress shows there still ; and dowered
With natural life, second to nought save soul.
Wherefore, bright worlds, your parent spirit exalt ;
Leap 'mid your solar dance ; with awful mirth
Joy in yourselves and gladden in your God.
He through your space spread tome, of light and peace,
And fates more blessed than these, of rights divine
And heavenly royalties, his starry rede
To man predictive speaks, whose words are worlds.

CLARA. Stars restful, who, day's dazzling veil withdrawn,
Heaven's sanctuary illumine, your laws, powers, spheres,
Graduate, each gift of the variousness he sole

Holds in perfective fulness, reason of thanks
 Past numbering, him, through all life mundane, adore
 Harmoniously. Time's tawdry pageants pass.
 States, empires come—pause, vanish. O'er yon hills,
 Your globèd fires, in dread-fraught sameliness
 Of time and place, rise punctual. Shall stars show
 More than their founder, faithful?

FESTUS. Hear, all orbs,
 Moveless, or who, persistent in extremes,
 Course fast and far the firmament, and, ours quit,
 Warm ye full oft by alien hearths; while proud
 Of chaste and chartered liberties, your sire,
 Source, force and end of every law by him
 To creatures limited, he by all bonds unbound,
 Above law, praise the Lawgiver; who poured ye forth
 As from an urn of life; flooding with light
 All space, but gave space, light, life, bound and scope;
 Order divine, connate with heaven; and form,
 First of all laws, whereby the immensurable,
 To finite fitted, fills the organic whole:
 Mirror material of substantive mind;
 For nothing finite, nought conceivable
 By us, can of itself be, more than God,
 Beyond thought, to aught else existence owe.
 Effect pretemporal of eternal cause,
 Heaven in thy highest reach, thy starriest depth,
 Thy bosom's inmost infinite, sanctify,
 With thy voluminous silence him all wise;
 Who, holding all perfections absolute
 And necessary, as all conclusions time,
 As space orbs, as earth nature's countless germs,
 The great progressive power which prompts with life
 Their self-renewing functions, and unseals
 The flowing forces of this sensible sphere—
 Aye tabernacleth in thee.

CLARA. And thou, O earth,
 Who movest in music, like a harper's hand,
 White among gleamy chords, thine elements,
 Stringed fourfold, laud him with all sounds of joy;
 With joy august and dread, great mother world,
 Whose veins within, the fire Promethean stolen
 Truly of heaven, and him, who planned the plains
 Æthereal, streams from unbeginning time
 To time unending; cease not, earth, his praise,
 Who in himself imbreasts both thee and heaven.

FESTUS. O heart of fire, which, central, towards our feet
 Throbbeest, through rock girders zone wide, and huge halls
 Where stalactital mountains hang, and whence
 Are fed the deep gorged volcanoes that erst scarred
 With channelled flame-floods and hot torrent ore,
 Earth's soft face, healing now; material shape
 First looming, which, uncurbed and uncompressed,

Swept'st o'er the naked void, a burning mist ;
 Till, stiffened gradual, the constituent mass,
 Once reek-like, severing into self-poised spheres,
 In gravity rejoiced, space circling ; him
 Greet as liege loyal Master, who, of old,
 On the high mount of world enlightening law—
 For law is love defined—toward those who brake
 So soon the tabled stones of blessing, tamed down,
 And tempered into intolerable blaze,
 The eye glance of his wrath ; fire, praise thou God ;
 Earliest of worldly rudiments, and last ;
 Voracious even of death, though bodiless,
 Though soulless. Retributive cause, him praise.

CLARA. Grey ocean, folding in thine arms our earth
 Still shrinking tremulous from the booming shock
 Of thy foam-crested legions, laud the arm
 Which, forceful, hollowed thine abysmal bed.
 All not thine own, with other thronèd thieves—
 Thou must yield up. What justice bids restore
 In thy store count not. Neither quite despair.
 The prayers of purity and of penitent sin
 Like favourites be of God. He, righteous, reads,
 As through a tear in nature's eye, thy deeps
 Reluctant ; and just restitution claims
 From thee, from all, before acceptance. Night
 And morn, thy voice, or tolling to repose
 I hear, or whispering out of sleep. To earth's
 Tongue, and all elements, join then, Ocean, thine ;
 Him equitable, only unsearchable, name.

FESTUS. Tides, that with tranquil transport woo the shore,
 Or vehement rapture roused by passionate airs,
 Clash, cymbalwise, your white hands. He is God
 Who fashioned you, evoked you from the void
 Impalpable of vapour, and with force
 Mobile, as with resistless will endowed,
 Spell over in every wave his words of love,
 When first he taught you whence ye were ; and when,
 Wearied with vast librations to and fro,
 And sparklings infinite, twinkling time away,
 Your deep breasts heave with long and dreamy swell,
 Let his dread name, untongued, initiate sleep,
 And hallow all your calm.

CLARA. Him, ebb and flood,
 Now heaped in billowy darkness, now ungloomed
 By streamy globelets of liquescent flame,
 Like light chaotic struggling for free life,
 Worship in all your width ; who bade ye flow
 From fountains elemental, and condensed,
 In the cool concave of his spacious hand,
 The world air limitless, wherein he breathed
 All being into being, Laud your God.

FESTUS. Winds, tireless wayfarers of air, like aged

With the beginning, his all fatherly lips
 Bless, that from dull vacuity woke ye, now
 Laden with death tempestuous, but with wafts
 Oftener of his world vivifying breath,
 Who matter into movement touching, gave ye
 To rove the earth as spirits space : his name
 In secret sigh as lovers wont, therewith
 All elements divinizing ; and while ye sweep
 Earth in bland waves aerial, gales health-rife,
 The white wheat winnowing for high granaries,
 A life-whole benediction breathe. What less
 Can creature its Creator give ? What more ?
 Him whirlwinds, hurricanes, wild winged storms, confess,
 Earthquakes, and powers pernicious ; that the breast
 Of this fair orb have rent aforetime ; nor
 This sole ; but once disrupting into space
 Our midmost planet, shot, diffuse through void,
 A shower of falling worlds ; just judgment ;—praise
 Destructive him, him recreative, who yet
 Those shattered world-shards shall restore, conglobed
 In innocent unity, and to happier life
 Their intercurative tenants. Meteors, him,
 And lightnings, laud with thunders thousandfold,
 Who do his bidden hests, and justify
 God's dealings, when beneath high bannered tent,
 The feastful conqueror, thunder riven, down drops
 Before his guests astound ; or, on his throne,
 Struck by a falling star, loosed from God's hand,
 The tyrant, curse incarnate, suddenly ends
 In face of all the land he had outraged. Him,
 Agents of wrath and angels of his ire,
 Laud, who, too, slays with uncompassionate bolt
 Shepherd and sheep blameless alike, in shade
 Of weathering crag, death dreamed not of, nor ill ;
 Praise him, nathless, that man's whole race may know
 Submiss, prepared, the incomprehensible One ;
 Who in himself all motives, means, and ends,
 Compriseth, first and final cause of things.
 Nor by necessity he, nor dubious choice
 Of specious good, acts ; but the best wills, does,
 As absolute viewed, now, relative or eterne.

CLARA. Snow, with thy voiceless tongue, from either pole
 To zenith, preach in godliest silence God ;
 Who ice and frost, thy sterner brethren, armed
 With glassy key to lock earth's lifewarm veins ;
 Praise him reanimative. Thy glistening down,
 Thy blossoming starlets, thy crystalline flowers,
 White as the wing of angel waved in heaven
 Only, shed thankful. God exalts the pure.
 On peaks sky peering, and earth's orbèd brow
 Upturned as in God's arms, thy Lord adore.

FESTUS. Night's dazzling dancers, tall-speared, which invade

Air northward, with explosive rays, the stars'
 Pale armies routing breathless, and sure morn
 Confounding with false outbursts ; ominous once
 Of imminent battle strife, fear's restless ears
 Deafening with clash imaginary of arms ;
 With all your fiery tongues, lambent of heaven,
 Peal forth to God your resonant thanks, that ye,
 Mere militant maskers known, men now your play
 With curious questings mark, and cheerful awe ;
 For knowledge hath undreaded ye ; no more
 Prefigurative of war. Haste, days of peace,
 Humanity's perfection, peace ; our path
 Convergent with divinity, there ; oh, haste,
 Man shall be one in spirit as God is one.
 Our God is Lord of peace.

CLARA. Breathe, glittering bow,
 All hued, ere burst, as though from beauty o'ertense,
 Thy brief, bright life throughout, one solemn thought ;
 God's oath, how thankworthy ; the passed passed by ;
 Which, sparing earth, thee special witness hight,
 Man's heart to reassure 'gainst ruining storms ;
 While far beyond, bides aye the intent divine
 Of precreative love. Him, bow of heaven,
 God's holy oath made visible here, adore.

FESTUS. Laud him ye cloudlets snow-bosomed, which morn
 Or eve serve, golden robed ; or, rich in rain,
 Blend tearful blessings with the reviling blast ;
 Praise ye, whose life expends itself in good,
 The source surceaseless of all blessings. Hymn
 Your God, while hurrying on wing-footed winds,
 His messages of mercy to scorched lands
 Dreaming of violet wreaths, dew soaked, to cool
 Their sun seared breasts, and widening deserts strew
 With riot of rank greenery ; or, when slow
 Beneath the moon, ye swoon away utterly,
 Earth breathing lightlier then ; each blade and bloom
 Bedropped with fragrant moist ; cheer ye ; your life
 Culmines in death ; for, from your birth-hour, known
 Of no man, midst the black Atlantic, wroth
 At ancient bans ignored, which betwixt old
 And young world barred alliance, now with coils
 The voiceable lightnings dart through, perfected,
 Till life's last moment, God your whole career
 Sums in his eye's broad purpose. What, round heaven,
 Hath seemlier honour ? Praise him for your end.

CLARA. Storm breasting cliffs, whose feet, earth stained, the deep
 Laveth, as with the humility of a god ;
 Oh ! of that steadfast strength make much, your Lord
 Hath sunken you in and grounded you, as signs
 Of his unshaken truth, against whose face
 The spray of years from time's unnumbered tides,
 Dashes in vain. Rocks, glory in your host ;

Earth framer he who hath kinged you with his name,
And ta'en your own ; whose guests are ye for life ;
And then, make room.

FESTUS.

Ye too, who sit serene,
Firstborn of earth and ancients of the snow ;
Time's youthmates ; mountains, solemn as God's thoughts
Pondering the chain of being, life with life
Linked in connatural lineage round to him ;
Praise ye his favouring hand, who in earth's murk breast
Moulded your giant forms ; who, age by age,
Tried ye with flood, and tested ye with fire ;
Proved ye with darkness ; racked ye patiently,
As schooling for perfection ; and at last,
Crowned and consummate in all mysteries,
Led into sacred light, the outmost court
Of God's invisible temple, whose dome is life,
Whose sanctuary the soul ; him, aye at rise
And set of sun, when comeliest ye appear,
In fiery albs arrayed and burning snows,
To adore fail not ; for he in your most pure
Beauty delights ; and to his heavenly eye,
Whose loveliness shows boundless as his love,
All beauteousness is holy. Laud ye him,
Whose mystic name heaven, secret and sublime,
Hath yet to you assured. Him praise, too, plains,
Teeming with succulent life, glebe, glade, and lea,
With homeliest blossoms blushing now, with fruit,
Boughed soon delicious ; or solemnized with corn ;
Confess who blessed you with the privilege man
To banquet : man, earth's king.

CLARA.

Coy valleys, lisp
Well pleased, your thanks, that God's attempering hand
Hath smoothed ye meet for happiest ends, and made
Shadows substantial of the calm which broods,
Welkin-like, o'er those upper deeps of soul
Vain worldling sounds not, nor pride's keel profanes.
Gush into song, shy nooks ; dells fall and swell,
With every deep pulsation of earth's heart,
Into melodious praise, even as joy's eye
Melts in the measureless relief of tears.
Him whose ordaining hand your solitudes
Hath given to peace, adore : who heaved the hills,
Your dales too delved as deep.

FESTUS.

Vine mantled knolls,
Whence 'stils the grape blood choicest juice that charms
God's tabled round, the earth ; him, palm plumed vales,
Where glow all fruits of tropic fame ; and fields
That temperate taste, the palate's luxe, rules ; him,
Hot wilds of herbage sparse ; all healing roots,
And wholesome poisons ; spice and incense ; all
For our sustenance and delight which fructify,
Or flourish bosky laurel, myrtle, and bay ;

Oil-olive, guide to wisdom, pledge of peace ;
 Gum, balm, acacia's sinless branch, and myrrh ;
 Pour forth your sweet breath'd thanks, till starry earth,
 Still fair, still dear, still in her matron prime,
 With thickening odours cloud her sacred path,
 Like a swung censer through the templed skies.

CLARA. Bloom bedded pleasancess, where leisured taste
 Luxuriates, as in recollected dreams
 Of life prenatal in God's garden ; him,
 How fair, the beautifier of all worlds,
 Worship ; and all ye plants, well nurtur'd, praise ;
 Who quickened you from dark and obdurate seed ;
 Suppled with balmy showers your growthful roots ;
 Gave daily dews ; tapered your shapely stems
 In his fine fingers ; with free foliage clad,
 Pendent and plenteous ; starred your heads with flowers,
 Crosswise or radiate ; praise him with meek pride.
 It was his considerate touch your bosoms bathed
 With heaven's translucent hues ; your heart-buds dyed
 In sunsets paradisal ; steeped your leaves,
 One moment, in ætherial scents ; and streaked
 With veinlets velvet lined, your nectarous cups ;
 None less, none else. O virgin lily, queen
 Of flowers, immaculate, vaunt, with all thy kin
 Most delicate, vaunt, not less than forest oaken,
 Or cedarn, fane-famed, ebon, sandal, rose ;
 Settim, God's ark, or gopher, man's, his hand ;
 Nor shadowy pine copse, soundless as the void.

FESTUS. Fair fountains, rainbow haunted, art hath voiced
 Through marble lips, and 'mid palatial courts
 Bade whisper God's great name ; you that, like strings
 Of liquid silver, ripple 'neath nature's touch,
 In lifeful melody ; and, through daisied banks,
 By your own sweet song solaced, seek your end
 In joy unlesseable : and you, tameless springs,
 Froth flecked, that seawards gash the plashy moor ;
 Or rush, rock maddened, adown deep jagged ravines,
 Chant, murmurous him ; him, rill and runnel praise.

CLARA. Praise him, ye rivers, vastening as ye roll,
 From ice cleft or turfed slope, to where the main
 Lurks watchful, with your waters soft and sweet,
 To slake his lips salt-parched, and tribute seize
 In kind of his liege loves ; and you, from heights
 Flush with the eagle's eyrie, plunging, death
 Scorning as life, for are not ye immortal ?
 And you from chasmy and glacial wilds, death-white,
 Or pine clad gore, leaping, cloud shrouded ; praise
 His name, who on your first precipitous steps,
 And pretty stumbling falls, smiled stealthily ;
 Your infant course mapped ; fed with milky mists ;
 And, guiding to good ends the waywardest course,
 Those swift, still feet subservient made to bear

Treasures of sap to meadland, swathed in sward,
 Or leagues of grain, heart strengthening ; all the sun,
 Of annual growth, or root perennial, helps
 Mature, with you, praise him for.

FESTUS. Seas, land ringed,
 Primæval ocean's relics, and ye fresh
 And lucid lakelets, where the stark fisher, man,
 First floated his rough raft, and the mud hut
 He, beaverlike, had buildd, fortified ;
 Or where, hard by, the cave-born savage left
 His liberal bones to mell with those he had gnawn ;
 Rejoice, and bless your Maker, that in your breast
 Lie glassed now cities and castled palaces,
 Wood nested cots, rich mansions, gold topped fanes,
 And seats of science ; while o'er your faces skim
 Barks self impelled, art's noblest, manliest feat.
 God, necessary in essence, in will free,
 Because illimitable, and free to free
 From general law his special will and ours,
 Powers self determinative, through all his works
 In apt proportions acts to ends well planned ;
 Rules rudest nature by dynamic law,
 Spatially operative ; his own designs
 Oft modifying by like wise ; empowers
 Organic being with instinct ; but to mind
 Leaves liberty of motive ; and himself
 Conceals, to allow to man and angel scope
 Accountable. Let all life praise its Lord
 Therefore ; of beasts, if tamed, as God's claimed once,
 Ours now, whose inoffensive natures he,
 Most amiable, as ensamples chose of his
 All suffering deity ; laud him, end and head
 Of sacrifice ; if wild, his prescience praise,
 Which would not mean should nobler strains restrict.
 Dwellers in ocean's wave roofed hall, who range,
 Constant, from shoal to deep, from deep to shoal ;
 Him worship, heavenly husbandman, who drives
 Yearly his star-plough o'er the brine, and seeds
 Its furrows with your innumerable hosts of life.
 Cloud haunters, ocean now, the skies anon
 Enthralling, greet him gratefully who gave
 Your strength despotic, and powers of threefold use ;
 Wave cradled, riding winds, land tripping ; hail
 Your Maker irresponsible, who all being
 Founded, not found made, and so justified.

CLARA. And you, bright song-birds, whose felicitous lives
 In flight, thought-swift, and music sweet as love,
 Heart-harmony, elapse ; song, even and morn,
 Concerted, trill, grateful to him who grants
 Your innocent souls earth's luxuries, and in life
 Here, something like the liberties of heaven.

FESTUS. Your kind with force, choice honoured, and so allied

By nature's lord to the world's conscious sense
 And rational energy, him, ye serpent seed,
 Skin sloughing, witness annual of new birth ;
 Him, too, ye insect tribes, thrice-lived, who joy
 In natural resurrection, and fulfil
 The cycle of being, glorified with wings ;
 Of luminous bodies, ye ; or, honeyed swarms,
 In politic craft pre-eminent, and sage use
 Of toil divisional with constructive skill,
 Praise ; praise ye gay broods, dawn-born, night-slain, air
 With filmy winglet fanning ; nor yet grieve. Death,
 Impatient not for you alone, secures
 In his dark couch, after life's giddy reel,
 A sequel undisturbed. Ye animate motes,
 Uneveable, whose curt existence we
 Laugh into nought at every breath ; yet deem
 Your Maker bounteous. Life, how scant soever,
 Seems good, as loaned of God, whose arm all space
 Outspans, whose eye all mirrors.

CLARA. Him, then, hymn,
 O universal nature, passive power
 Of deity, which, with the minutest thing
 Subsistent, owest thyself totally to God ;
 The whole embracing in thy boundless breast ;
 Our world-sire praise ; while yet immortal man,
 The intelligible light, silent, within,
 Shall clearer hear than though each atom spake ;
 Or every cloudlet thundered, Worship God.

FESTUS. Him worship, all of human blood who roam,
 Tribal, in wilds ; for breath, food, freedom, praise ;
 Ye more, who, fixed, live the life refined
 Of cities, amid societies of the wise ;
 Graced with all science, learning, interchange
 Of luxuries, profitable to all, and wealth,
 Art's delicate toil, or lowliest labour, earns :
 For polity based on manly rights ; for life
 Social, by moral law, with usance kind,
 Confederate, ruled ; for nature's comely boons ;
 For virtue's bonds majestic ; mind's delights ;
 The affections of the heart ; the joys of sense ;
 Man's common usefulness to man, whereby
 The general good conceived of thee, and blessed
 In that conception, issues : for the gift
 Those fitnesses to trace in all thy works,
 Which, proved the intent, glads and sublimes man's soul,
 Conclusive of resemblant powers ; and deeds
 Like, but how little like ! Him bless for power
 To separate truth from error, right from wrong ;
 For love of knowledge ; art's purifying grace ;
 For cultured mind ; for means material thrall'd
 In thousand shapes by inventive wit ; and now
 Forces of progress, aids to man's high race,

And holy future ; succourers of the world ;
 Aye working through part ends its end complete,
 Through beauty, good, truth ; order realized,
 Expressed or thought, its way back to God's breast ,
 Seat both of law and liberty, needful each
 For mere creation ; he o'er both supreme.
 Praise him, all bounteous, for the intelligence
 Inquisitive, which from every being would wrest
 The reason of its existence, nor, tongue-stilled,
 Slacks but in gaze of thee, before whose face
 Bow angel essences, in number more
 Than night's invisible stars, wherewith, commixed,
 The forces of the universe stand ; him praise
 Who is praised of all. Praise him for power to praise.

CLARA. Ye continents many-peopled, and all isles,
 Children of earth and ocean ; and thou, chief,
 Who hast the birthright and the blessing ; swell
 With jubilant joy, the song to him supreme,
 Father and friend of life ; who man's crude needs
 Mildens with heavenly sanctions, by seer's voice
 Or prophet's ; justice names his assessor ;
 Gives nations the reward of well-doing, peace,
 While evildoers themselves accurse by war ;
 Presumptuous states by races checks, and stress
 Of personal interaction ; now lays bare
 To scoffing ages popular policy ;
 Now scheming power's recondite cunning ; heeds
 Indignant, empires wrongs reciprocate,
 Just rights unheld complacent ; to all doles
 Such excellencies as wisdom warrants. Nought
 Lacks he true 'compt of, who, with all that think,
 Most intimate secretly, cons both, and weighs
 Men's individual deeds ; which, though we feign
 Transient to hold and trivial, by him glimpsed
 Prove not phænomenal merely, but imply
 Eternal bearings ; and here rooted, there
 Fruit freely ; if to our contentment, well ;
 If otherwise, still reproachless he, whose end,
 In all creating, was to diffuse himself
 Through life in uncontaminate good ; to all
 As present, and to those he loves most nigh.
 Him, in the heights of his divinity, praise,
 The depths of his humanity ; the breadth
 Of being ; who redemptive reassumes,
 Into his perfect nature ours ; fills up,
 With promised gifts to penitence due all souls
 Deficiency ; souls which in manhood setting, rise
 In deity, praise ; all lands, lips, nations, hail
 His laudable name ; till, passed from world to world,
 Their shining feet it reach, who, glorious, tread,
 Starpaved and straight, the streets of Paradise.

FESTUS. Him, workers of the world, world-wielder him,

Blessed in activity, blesser of repose,
 Praise ceaseless, who with alternative rest
 And action, nature's self-perpetuate scheme
 Poises ; contracting or expanding force
 The ages hoard, the hours distribute ; him
 Who, coupling life with motion, builds on rest
 Eternal heaven. Who labour's law reverse,
 The sweat of honest toil, deeming a dew
 Grateful to God, more than that beads the rose,
 Land, manful, him, ye who gaunt want, fell foe
 To life and knowledge, battling daily, yet
 Wot well where'er on earth be faith and truth,
 Aim holy or aspiration, there is God ;
 That all who do their best of hand or mind,
 Do well ; and thought devout may every task,
 Not of itself unholy, hallow. Him
 Unchangeable himself, but of all change
 Impressive ; self-necessitating cause ;
 Ye truth searchers exalt, whose trust to know
 All verity as in heaven, he, sovereign soul
 Of being, divines, and turns to simplest faith ;
 Who, more than all, is ; whom apparent things,
 Fruit transient of eternal root unseen,
 Conspire to honour, from life's primal cell,
 To heaven's immeasurable arch, and hosts
 Contiguous of all being ; which both worlds
 Exterior and intrinsic, link in powers
 Reactive ; and God indwelling in the world
 Evince ; but God, most just ; who towards us acts
 As he would have us act towards all and him ;
 Exacting from perfection perfect deed,
 Granting the imperfect, grace ; his equity such.
 Who loves the spirit longsuffering like himself ;
 But his own binds in normal righteousness
 To manwards, and assumes the splendid coil,
 Wherewith, attaching nature to himself,
 True freedom means obedience to high law,—
 Our spirits he liberates and exalts. Him praise,
 In whose divine perception all things made,
 Move congruous, designate for final good ;
 Happy because all holy ; in his love
 Boundless ; in virtue sumless ; who for us
 Made truth compensate nature, and with light
 Kinned and companioned her ; the soul's guide that,
 This, body's ; him let man praise, who, empowered
 With high capacities to administer here,
 Creation's uses and our own, yet dares,
 Humbly, the stores his Lord for him amassed
 In times bygone, adjust ; and the vague force
 Nature inbred at birth, condenses, fines ;
 The code of life interprets ; and, inspired
 Conform with reason, faculty supreme,

Divine, and to both common, truth revealed,
As march the ages on, makes more humane,
And so more worthy God.

CLARA.

Him, deeplier taught

In holiest mysteries, blessed o'er all in soul,
Simple or sage, ye of celestial strain,
Yet earth-born, laud, who caused ye, finite, know
Him infinite ; and his nature imageing
In your conditionate essence, be to him
Through man's immediate kinship, as his Son,
Your whole life one sole filial act ; and though,
Like star cloud permanent in the void, the cross,
Mystery insoluble, still shadowing shame
With honour, earth's hate thwarted by God's love,
Proclaim it, man redeemed, as e'er thy first
Of blessings. Thanks for all things, but for this,
Thanks threefold !

FESTUS.

Oh ! it were a blessed thing

Faith such as thine to have held unfaltering ; ne'er
To have fainted, failed, waned, wavered. It is as when
In Alp-land, on some white and fanglike crag,
Keen, cruel as Time's tooth, earth's blanched extreme,
Trophy of this world's desolateness, I've seen
A splintered cross, memorial frail, upreared
By perilous piety, once, and since, of aught
Save vulturous levity of wing, untopped ;
By snows path-hating, blurred ; by gelid rains
Glazed ; streaming, now, with long and icy tears ;
Now tempest-rapt from vision ; now, to the eye
Restored by curative lightnings ; by the sun's
First rays saluted, by his last ; there, still,
Ever, with arms outstretched, obtesting all
The elements, even as though sphere-kinned, it stand,
Dumb, but attesting God, and the white world
Adjured, to witness that, nor scorching shire,
Storm, nor all mutable seasons can defeat
Its changeless cheer ; itself so frail, yet sign
Of that's eternal ; so, 'gainst time's assaults,
'Gainst nature's banded powers, thy faith thou hold'st
Inalterable, triumphant.

CLARA.

Yea, I hold.

FESTUS. God grant thee this to enjoy, and to the end ?
Mine always such I dare not say ; but now,
Lord of our life ! of this sure, more than aught,
Let us, while praising thee for all, most praise
For thy regenerant spirit which hallowing life,
Ones it with thine ; whereby we dread not death,
The house the sun must pass through, and the sign
Which us initiates into heaven ; but know
Death means reunion with the deathless ; range
With our translated elders ; consciousness
Enlarged of the eternal spirit unmarred

By bodily needments ; life at one with God ;
 And faith's huge promises ; our souls assume
 The future, and we covenant here for heaven ;
 Confirmed by fate. Here, and for ever, him
 All souls, praise. Praise him, lovers of his law
 Unwrit, word unrevealed, but to yourselves ;
 Not for those faculties only with all life
 Ye own instinctive, but each mental gift
 Enlightened conscience sways ; for conscience' self ;
 For those affections not the world, not man,
 Not country, friendship, love exhausts, nor blood,
 While just devotion burns in us towards him ;
 For those high powers, conceptions, hopes, which fill
 Or thrill our breasts ; which prophets e'er have preached,
 Or nature hints we share, the unboundedness
 Of time, existence, will ; the ennobling sense
 Of duteness towards men, of debt to God ;
 For reason, whose undimmed outlook o'er the world,
 Is balanced by right insight into ourselves ;
 For a life whitening through probation, here ;
 For deep convictions of a loftier lot,
 An ampler scope of spirit, a draught of bliss
 Endless, to be, nearer the fount ; praise him
 Who godly care spares not, nor stores, that we,
 Saved from our niggard selves, and unto him
 Assimilate, may, through good deeds faith inspired ;
 Just estimate of divine love towards all made ;
 Life venerable and pure ; the calm supreme
 And clear of sacred souls, the quietude
 Intense and infinite, gain of holy thoughts ;
 Such as he loves and lives in.

CLARA.

Laud ye God,

Saviour and instigator of all good ;
 Yet not the less impenetrable ! who ill
 O'errules to good ; both mingles ; ends and means
 Metes ; sparing now, as space were something scant ;
 Now lavish of waste worlds ; atomic force
 Economizing here ; there solar powers
 Permitting perish. What then ? That sun hath long
 Compassed its end ; this atom a world's head
 May yet be. Him, ye just in soul, adore,
 Who, latent deity, gives place to all,
 And takes away ; whose holy attributes,
 Essential as his being, ray and rule
 From him, through all his rational works ; the source
 Of every virtuous tie the world of soul
 Acknowledgeth, as from wisdom's sacred breast
 Spontaneous sprung ; whereby God laws himself
 In natural rectitude, with all create ;
 He who all made, himself to manifest ;
 And to intelligent creatures gave to know,
 Possess, communicate, his love and truth ;

His righteousness to emulate ; to share
 His holiness ; his beatitude enjoy ;
 And, in his wisdom skilled, in his intents
 Proved, and heart purified, for others' weal
 Most labouring, taught to crown with moral good
 The vast divine of things.

FESTUS. But though the mass
 Be holy, yet the first-fruits God most loves.
 Praise, therefore, him, ye sons of light, and bless
 The communable deity, who, albeit,
 Perpetual passion suffering at men's hands,
 Hoards not from those he loves divinity ; him,
 Participants of his kingly state, whose wills
 With his conjoined, subregnant rule, the same,
 Though in narrower round, as his ; praise him supreme,
 Who loves the praises he in hymns inspires,
 Or, wordlessly, imbreathes. Let all forechosen ;
 Ambitious only of more humility ;
 Exalted but to serve ; who, while in time,
 Bide truelier in the eternal state, which rests
 To each world proper, pillared upon the passed
 And future in the soul, praise him ; ye, most,
 Whose privilege is to please God perfectly ;
 Earth this wise tolerated ; whereto ye lend,
 Like fire from faith's accepted offering,
 The savour of salvation ; whose heart's hope
 That all souls might be saved, by him inspired,
 Transfigured into fate, reads sure in heaven.
 All ways are byeways but the way of God,
 So broad, not thought a road. And man's wise heart
 Which wide relations with the infallible holds,
 Though flawed by error ; with all excellence,
 Moral and rational ; with God immanent
 In all things, yet transcendent over all,
 Knows him sire, saviour, sanctifier of soul ;
 Who in their principles cores all ends ; combines
 Results forestablished with acts freely willed ;
 Through body clarifies the spirit of man ;
 And virtue made obligatory, but ruled,
 For its validity, rise and close in him.

CLARA. Him praise, ye generations of the passed,
 Whose unrenown seems holier than all fame ;
 All final history in her epitaphs
 Of nations notes ; him, who the adopted soul
 Fills, by sin's absolution, with rich foretaste
 Of evil's abolition ; the world stamped
 With total good. Praise him, ye sceptered saints
 With God, like-minded, glorying in his will,
 Impeccable, who muse celestial things ;
 Whose sins are washed away in seas of love ;
 Who, liberate from all law, sit judging law ;
 Whose passion for perfection sated, ye,

Rapt into deity, with your Lord enjoy
 Life unitive, life eternal, life divine ;
 Who revel in futurity, and inhale
 The gust of inspiration at his lips ;
 Of all worlds owner, author of all fates.

FESTUS. Who knoweth God the sum of science owns,
 The heavens record his handiwork ; the earth
 Worships his footsteps ; life his breath repeats ;
 The soul his image ; everlasting space,
 The harmonies of his nature echoing, round
 Reflects his vast extension ; the great whole
 His boundless being, and his infinite mind.

CLARA. Midst, but apart from all, he substance gives
 And choice, distinct from others and himself ;
 Yet himself makes the beauty and the bliss
 Of his intelligent universe ; its aim,
 Its orderly source, its endless end ; whose rule,
 Let justice among equals reign,—is love.
 For he with us not varying, harsh or bland,
 As our vain 'haviour bids, but in himself
 All kind, sufficing, fixed ; unroughed by wrath,
 By bribeful prayers unsmoothed ; towards all his works
 Piteous, yea, sentient of faith's faintest sigh,
 In all his sweetness, is by none save soul
 Saved, apprehensible.

FESTUS. Lord, be it for me
 With earth's triumphal hymn these lays to blend,
 Worthy but of thy blessing that they flow
 From gifts thou gavest, reconsecrate to thee ;
 Whereby in thy dear love thou madest it mine
 To interpret nature's elements, and with her
 In all her holy tongues commune ; to live
 In presence of our peers, the powers of heaven,
 Sun, moon, and skies star-crowded ; clouds, winds, tides ;
 Born of yon far blue infinite ; but all
 Predestined to soul service ; mine to scan,
 In greatest minds' great thoughts, earth's passed ; betimes
 Fatal, foreshape the future ; mine to know,
 In moral might towards thee deific drawn
 All spirits in order blessed ; mine, henceforth, aye
 To extol thee merciful as mighty ; thee,
 Ours, and all being's, end and author, God.
 All things in thee subsistent, thou alone
 In thyself art ; all eyeing at one glance ;
 All minding in one thought ; in one sole act,
 Creating, comprehending, judging all.
 Unalterable as silence, thy decrees
 Are boundless and for ever. Thy delight
 Is in the holy of heaven, and in the heart
 Responsive to thy counsels. Even as space,
 All things embosoming, is thy mercifulness.
 Thy love is life ; and they who find thee here,

Find perfectness and peace ; eternal gifts ;
Peace in themselves, and perfectness in thee.

CLARA. Hallowed and comforted the soul, elate
By pure prostration at God's feet, the world
Meets but scant welcome from us ; we half hoped
To have lost what soon we lose for aye and all.

FESTUS. I seek no selfish gladness, though to me
High thoughts are life, and life immortal more
Only in conception as divine than this,
Our perishable, in act ; yet would not I
Forestall apart from thee those paths, those plans
We have hope to perfect in eternity.

To search together truth space-wide ; to soar
In spirit unitedly through all the immense
Thus, of celestial thought, gives joy sublime,
I know to both. As when by sunset's hues
Invited, some fair falcon, whose broad eye
Mirrors the welkin, through air's shadowy blue
Wheeling with wing unwavering, every plume,
Stretched tense, mid sky serenely balanced, calls
Forth from her eyrie, crown of sea-faced crag,
His mightier mate ; these twain each other now
In unconceived ellipse, curve following curve,
Redoubled rainbowlike, outswEEP ; thrice o'er
Snatch from ambition's touch the zenith ; mock
With playful fall the expectant earth ; now, thwart,
In arbitrary and intercircling flights,
Their mutual orbits, emulous ; this below
Echoing the other's cry on high, till heaven
Closes, by hint of stars, the rapt contest.

CLARA. How near earth's end !

FESTUS.

Earth's future soon is told,
Nigher each hour, the incredible becomes
What sole can be ; the key that all unlocks.
For now not only our life's exterior charms,
Earth's beauties perish, but mind's most treasured joys,
Brain-realms pictorial of creative thought,
Fairer than Eden, were that garden all
Fiction entranced, e'er dreamed. Song, art, romance,
Farewell ! Hope is, we enjoy not only, there,
The future, but the passed made clear, sublimed,
Perfect. Perchance in life to come a glimpse
May ope, God good, to memory's inward eye
From all imperfect aims, impure views, purged
Of divine fable. If not, be it as God will ;
But as when the moon at her full round arrived
Of beauty, uprising, level, from the main,
Late turbulent, smiles to behold the loyal waves'
Awe, and their hush low whispered hear as she
Venerable by birth, though young, just state assumes,
And splendid presidency ; these, too, like pleased
With her exact observance of all times,

And the well-lawed conformity to things
 Earthly, of things celestial and serene,
 As mutually assurant, yield her back,
 Considerate, smile for smile ; so I,—so thou,
 Souls like authentic, each the other's breast
 Let fill with pure content.

CLARA. As far as such,
 Amassed of all defects, avail.

FESTUS. There's one
 Defect we have each outlived. We part no more.

XLV.

Soul commune solitary with God, its great
 Surrender of the prized and partial boons
 Of personal privilege passing nature, now
 Self humbled, shown demissive; nor all sought
 By heaven accorded. But while welcomed what
 Is given, the soul to penitence self-adjudged,
 On pardon sought and prayed, from God receives
 His ghostly absolution. See, at last,
 The heart's first wish so sanctioned, so assured.
 The heaven-imputed charge, by earthly Powers
 Supported, proffered, imminent, now o'erweights
 The aspiring Spirit with prescient grief, if Heaven's
 Free testimony makes glad ; and man's assent
 General, but unproclaimed to power, God-vouched,
 Fills now with calm inalienable the soul.

A lonely Lodge among the Snowy Mountains.

FESTUS alone.—*Afterwards* GUARDIAN ANGEL, CLARA, and
 EMBASSAGE.

FESTUS. Hail, holy Hills, holy as unsubject
 To man's necessities, man's caprice ; and linked
 Rather by charm of changelessness to things
 Celestial round you, and the unwinged sphere,
 How spacious ! of the eternal ; ye who now
 In everlasting session, white and pure,
 Sit calm, as judging of the all-changing world ;
 But passed of old, flame forged, through orbèd fires
 Smote smooth, and on the anvil shapen of dumb
 Necessity, to that mould of just repose
 Henceforth, your own, as conscious of passed tests
 Of too great ardour to be borne, I come
 From pains self-stricken of remorse, and pangs
 Repentance fans conflagrant to a sense
 Of culpable injury sweetness more severe
 Pardoning left doubly guilty, me to add

To your serenest brotherhood, where each
 Like soul scourged kings through blanching penance shriven,
 In endless fast and solitude apart,
 But with me fellowing, in free penury
 Of all prerogatives cast away, all luxe
 Of marvellous gifts granted by grace of God,
 By man's, or nature's, earned, or bold embrace,
 Of wilier evil won, of honours all,
 Save dignity of impending death ; this, sole,
 Not to be laid down, lost, nor ta'en by force,
 Nor forfeited, by treason, nor by lapse,
 Of claim, or user's right ; of every fief
 Safest ; self stripped of each, of all, I ask
 Kinwise, and kingwise, welcome. By just vow,
 By resolute thought, self bound, am I not more
 God's obligate, than though I had girded me
 With a chain of mountains ; and with unlinked limbs
 Indeviable of purpose, I lay down
 All gifts once gloried in by one who now
 Would hold him weakest humblest of God's sons ;
 Who on these mountain altars would lay down
 His peerless privileges ; visitancy of stars ;
 Encompassage of space, and converse high
 And sacred with the heavenlies ; make his own,
 Lowliest of lives, nay, even if that he would
 Self sacrificed, retake.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Thy mortal life
 God not recalls yet ; nor thou, son of death,
 Death destined, death invoke. Heaven's ends are yet
 Not all gained. It is not life alone, in flesh
 But soul in life, and life in Him, God asks.
 The sacrifice God would is not of death,
 But life's continuous service, to the end
 Bettering.

FESTUS. Such, angel, seek I and foreclose
 All privileges of spirit once pined for ; all
 Wont, use, and joy in them ; all summits scaled
 Of holiest science, all the deeps unblessed
 Sounded, or cognizable afar of mind,
 My solace, my delight once, earth and Heaven
 Too lavish of their boons to me, of all
 Desertless ; thankless not. If therefore now
 In face of all these mountain elements
 And at His feet who made both me and them
 I all put off, and humbler than the dust
 Unpack me of such favours, count me not
 Ingrate, nor graceless, ye, nor thou, O God ;
 These holdings hide me from myself, mere man,
 If not from thee, pure Deity. Let me not
 One solitary pretence put forth of pride ;
 Nor boast me even of nothingness. Enough,
 Upon the bead roll of the intransient stars,

To count thy names, O God, thine attributes,
Of measureless perfection; equal all,
All infinite and inseparable each
From other; and with Him essential, one.
Lord of all virtues, oh when man's vain soul
Minds him, how oft he hath thee offended, 'gainst
His natural reason, spiritual sense of law,
Inborn of right, and summings clear of truth
Irrefutable; how oft by error wiled
Sin lures the soul to a banquet of distress
Where grief might gorge her fill, were appetite not
To that end at dead water, well he might
Say as I say; but can I say it? No!
I sin no more. Not less in firm intent,
Shall all these trappings, sin's contingents, here,
Wealth, pleasure, luxury, knowledge, greed of power,
Mind treasures boundless as the aerial gold
Which floods the o'erwealthy west of eve; all boons
Once sought for, hoped for, prayed for, and enjoyed;
Boons singularly possessed, and perfected
By sweet and sole experience in the way
Stand of my purpose not to know them more;
All powers, all gifts, and all delights in them,
That gave to walk in upper air, and course
Through yon ætherial space, sparse even of stars,
And with the immortals mingle; who of earth
Can word this rapture? All desire which eyes
Beauty, eyes view not, hate I. Me no more
The spirits of mind's bright impalpable world
Shall throng round, as the winds some mountain top;
Nor watery lightfulness of ghostly eyes,
Belonging heavenly forms informed with light,
Impose their spell of record, under pain.
The inspiration quits me; it is gone,
Like a retreating army from the land
Which it hath wasted: the long gleaming mass,
Snakelike, at last hath wound itself away,
And left me weak and wretched. None again
Of all the starry tribes of museful mien
Shall visit me. Their welcome cancelled; leave
Revoked; approach fenced off, forbid; henceforth,
Restricted to perfection, their own realm,
Me they may haunt no more; i' the coming time,
My soul and they be strangers. Let them quit.
True, albeit, I loved them more than life.
Knew myself hallowed by their quickening touch;
Their mere salute was consecration; gone!
They are gone; and nought of beauty is on earth
Left, with them comparable. All chastened hopes
Of sway beneficent o'er earth's soul; a charm
Mightier than all beside of wealth or power
Earth e'er could actualize or dream of, go.

I name ye not again ; I banish hence,
 Gold-mined, and countless leagues of land and sea
 All that this heart once coveted of days here
 Prolonged ; of love returned ; ambition summed ;
 And to its vastest compassed ; every hope
 Save, an' I might, Lord ! one except, for earth's
 Peace, and for purified souls return to thee,
 I do them off. I put them all away,
 With the constituent atomies of a frame
 Lost many a decade since. Let them rejoin
 The elements even as these I bear with now,
 When I am gone for ever, and this mould
 Shall help recast the rudiments of an orb
 Whose fates are yet unsyllabled in the word
 Omnific of our God. I am a wall,
 A tower of sunbaked blocks that crumbles down
 Into the clay it was made out of ; a tower
 That once o'erawed the region ; but which now,
 The enemy so hath shattered that my gaps
 Are greater than my masses ; more is fallen
 Than all that stands, and my remainings bulk
 Less than my ruins. I have saved a wreck
 Whose board scarce floats, flush with the face of death ;
 And save one inner lamplet in my breast,
 That lights an image of the tutelar god,
 I see nor sun by day, nor star by night,
 To steer by ; and the helmsman's gone death-blind.
 These gifts, may be, these potencies, I hold,
 Have nought but barred me out from nature's means
 Of raising man ; and so uprearing heaven
 On earth below. But as some mount august,
 Of oil, wine, wood prolific, root, grass, grain
 Itself denudeth age by age till rests,
 Fertile of food, nought, but all perisheth, down
 To the stone substantive of its parent plain,
 Noteless, unfructuous ; so though gradual that,
 And instant this, and sudden, my re-act,
 I give me as at first I was, a leaf
 Of all good vacuous, now a tablet rased
 Of every boon, to God. Soul-rid of all,
 Oh let time's torrent take them to its bed
 Of darkness. I will know of them no more,
 But stand before my God the merest man
 His vast creation knows. All yield I up ;
 Not boastfully ; not loathly ; but tear off
 Gladly. As a slave, self-robbed, self-sold for nought ;
 A castaway wretch, and naked to the quick,
 Thy living debt ; what am I more, to thee ?
 What can I more, than prostrate speechless, here,
 Wishless, alone, or sole with thee, confess
 Whatso thou wilt O God, will I.

GUARDIAN ANGEL.

Hear, man.

Last of the lineage loved, the elect of Heaven,
 Thine act and thy resolve alike have pleased
 The all-father. Not even God can cause the passed
 Return. It is thy fate, nought less, to rule
 By serving, and by serving, rule deserve.
 God's will it is that thy will, whole-sphered peace
 And sole and sovereign power, thy first desire
 When first conceived, conceded, be fulfilled,
 This great, this grave legation, at their head
 Thy faithful fair, from far approaching, ask
 Thine assent to their cause who bid thee reign,
 And will all end right soon to gory war,
 Through thee achieve. Lo ! empire laden, they come,
 Proceeding proud, but pompless, of all power.

FESTUS. Their suit is granted, heavenly one, who com'st,
 I feel, from God, ere claimed.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. See, who first hails ;
 Her joy by thine judge. Hear her, and revive.

CLARA. Thy footprints following through earth's loftiest snows,
 And nearest to the stars of aught mundane,
 Grieve not, nor blame whom here thou seest ; not me ;
 Sought by these kindest sages who believed
 True love could never lose its aim but points
 Errorless, to its object. I who had traced
 Thy foot-prints mornwards by the beneficent acts
 Of spirit enlightened nations, and had marked
 Where reason's torch accompanying had cleared
 Earth's darkest dens where superstition false,
 Foolish, or foul, hid ; thou, all pride renounced,
 All pomp, all thanks, that might attend thee, fledst
 Ever ; and higher, rarelier seen, becamst ;
 More secret, silent more ; (tracks still I knew ;)
 And knowing, for their good, and those unseen
 They speak for, benefactors of their kind,
 The realizers of schemes we long ago
 Had longed to further ; such thou wilt not blame ;
 Have hither to thy wonder, doubtless, come ;
 To bid thee grant, beside their quest, now urged,
 Thy loving leave, my life to add to thine,
 Mine aid to thy command : enlightened now
 By one of Heaven's immortals, dear to both,
 On thine earth-bettering aims, ennobling time ;
 Nor might I longer stint my joy, nor rein
 My foot from following thine.

FESTUS. Thrice welcome, sweet,
 I saint not, as uncanonized, but Heaven's
 First function fear to usurp ; whate'er the cause
 Of this auspicious advent.

CLARA. See them come,
 The high select of states depute and powers
 Illuminate, of time's last and wisest age,
 Bringing earth's empire with them.

FESTUS.

Friends, approach.

LEGATES. Obedient to our chief's, thy friend's behest
 Ere dying, and earth's many nationed will
 In unnoised conference of the wise expressed
 Thee seek we, king, who most of men, through us,
 The world to one faith winning, by consent
 Of all, art he, to whom man's race most owes
 Both fealty and love; and teaching men,
 In this belief simple, supreme, to end
 All creed-born differences in one great truth,
 None worthier to impersonate the world's
 Wide will for peace, we know; which end secured
 By nature and by policy 'neath one head,
 Thine own, dissension ceaseth: war's no more.
 Guided by one we knew knew thee, and where
 The exile self-banished, and the white retreat
 Neighbouring these aery regions whence are born
 Meteors the incendiaries of lowlier airs,
 At last we reach thee: though devote to rest
 Recuperative, amidst these snow-clad peaks,
 Soul's solitary aspirings embleming,
 But whence we, delegates of all sovereign states
 Whose dominant policy is world-peace and help
 Mutual of nations; ends to holiest souls
 Dear from the dawn of days, to these; and ne'er
 Was higher sanction known on earth than voice
 And place, of prophet-king, thyself would draw;
 Bidding in name of Heaven and man, conjoined
 In piety and in polity once, receive
 The symbols grateful earth through us, adjoined
 To charity, peace and unity, presents
 Of world-sway; one, thenceforth immoveable;
 The o'erthrow of all earth's petty potentates;
 The warm acclaim of nations of all climes,
 Tongues, of a creed, all else foregone, thine own,
 Simple, irrefutable, the same with Heaven's;
 Of worship as a pure and awed delight;
 Of wisdom, virtue, peace, and righteousness,
 Man's universal birthright through all lands;
 Take these our offerings, monarch; man of man.

FESTUS. Have I not seen this, among coming things,
 For what seems ages? That star-studded crown,
 Which hangs as though a hand out of the air
 Held it where'er I went before mine eyes?
 Rather let earth, truth, all things fail, than I
 Fulfilling fate, since all that now can hap
 Will serve but fate to unfold.

CLARA.

Let these depute
 Of extinct kings and demarchs, whose unthought
 Duty it is to serve, not reign, bring forth
 Robe, orb, crown, sceptre; bright and germinant signs
 And constellations of dominion. Now

Thy glory, my soul's lord is like the sky,
Nought's to be seen beyond it. Potent things,
Of lesser space, may sparkle in it starlike,
Thine all embraceth, all outstretcheth.

FESTUS.

Queen !

Faithful and dreadful thou as lioness ;
There spake the bride of empire. But for you,
Friends and fiduciaries of sacred power,
The accumulate fruit of all earth's kingdoms passed,
In one, the world could heretofore not brook
Your proffer, providence sanctioned, I accept,
For man's whole good ; that cause I answer for,
Only and alway, your constituent realms
Reseeking, in my name salute, and show
In blessed exchange for their rich gifts this sign
Of one pure potent, peaceful state, this sword
To the hilt thus shattered hopelessly ; and say ;
Hear world ; henceforth wars cease ; go, toss thy head,
And shake thy shoulders, like a horse disharnessed.
No more shalt thou, blood-blotted brand, men lure
To practice of thy fascinating sin ;
Nor crimson cloud-bath of the evening sun
The dreams of sleepful city or hamlet dye
With visionary death. Remains for thee
Nothing, O Earth ! but penitence for the passed,
All strife composed, and peace for the future.

LEGATES.

King,

It is not the world which makes thee great ; 'tis thou
Greatestest the nations. We depart.

FESTUS.

Farewell.

Nor linger thou, beloved one. Thou hast made
Me happy.

CLARA. This to know makes happier me.

FESTUS. Those whom thou led'st, rejoin. With them return.
Right soon, I'll be with ye.

CLARA.

Dear love, adieu.

FESTUS. While they, earth's ultimate order preached, prepare,
Have with thee every blessing life and time
Can lend, and thou enjoy ; and add, mine own.

CLARA. I go, to await thy coming.

FESTUS.

May the moon,

God's blessed creature, handmaid of his word
Her silvery headed shafts shower down to show
By night, and every morrowning sun, by day
Protective, light thy path. All gone. 'Tis well ;
I yet must be alone. These snow-spired hills,
These starfull skies which here have eyed so long
Time's struggles with the eternal, mine here closed,
Must see the end of strife. They know me now,
And best alone. Not only earth's glad peace,
Nought now can wrong, nought ruffle it, nor endanger,
More than a wild bird's wandering wing the air,

Must be assured ; but I of mine.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Believe,
Thou shalt be. Let not yet o'erbold desire
The grace cup patience fills, grasp unadvised.
Make no presumed security of God,
Nor because more thou hast had, and more hast cast
Away, deem either merit in his eye
Who still nor word nor sign gives ; lavish he,
Of silence, most ; for none can Him construe.

FESTUS. No ! 'tis enough, nought seek I more on earth.
All passion, all opinion, 'like contemned ;
Self-beggared of all boons once prized, my soul
All told, what is't ? unless a penitent sigh,
That dims eve's air, star bright ?

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Hope shall be thine ;
And constancy to endure what fate yet claims.

FESTUS. True ; I would shrink not from all dues. Time was,
I longed for power to hold ; sometime I have prayed
To escape from. 'Tis enjoined. The awful boon
To enjoy becomes the sacrifice.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. So be it.
The self deposed, the abdicated, ere crowned,
Behold restored. 'Tis but the imperial soul
Can make, or bear, the sacrifice supreme.

FESTUS. God's judgments I adore. And as in spring,
By Nanking, courtly seat of T'sin's high lord,
What time the winds harmoniously disposed
Tinkling the white pagoda's gilded bells
Meet music make to Heaven propitiable
All canopying, he, sovereign labourer, sole
With royal rights and sacerdotal crowned,
Who, year by year on the rebirth of things
Driving his furrow deep in earth, both soil
And toil doth hallow ; and with hand that curbs
A hundred kinglings, store of food fraught grain
Sowing, the steps of that bright tower then scales
In solemn solitude ; and upon its peak,
Wrestles alone with Heaven ; prostrate in prayer
Heart-scourged, and with confession, expiates thrice
Those sins the sun saw in his golden round,
By faultful nations done, till, night arrived,
He, of the stars inquisitive, through sage
And perfect intuition of the skies,
And mutual acts of spheres, and social signs,
The horoscope of nations, and of all
His diligent lands, art-drawn, he so descends,
Vicarious, bringing with him prosperous days ;
Thus seek I, who have sown so long the seed
Of peace, o'er time's broad field, earth's peace, God's peace.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Such may He grant.

FESTUS.

The sacrifice be mine.

XLVI.

Much of the passed is prophecy ; and now,
 All done, ambition earns his wage : proof, prize,
 Indisputable of peace. A social change
 Being wrought, with that like vast in nature's prime,
 When the elements less gross than air, condensed
 Into mountainous levels, broad footholds made themselves
 Of nations,—figuring forth the fateful mind
 Pacific, all controlling, war, and worse,
 Could worse be, in life's penultimate age. What war
 World wide and through all time had failed to achieve,
 Sage peace with sensitive hand unseen, wins. Love,
 Of mortal things last, nestles within the heart.
 Ambition ruined by success ; displaced,
 Humbled by destiny unforethought ; doubt's last
 Attack, see, crushed ; for though to the edge of hell
 Despair bring one self-blindfold, yet turns not
 Ours, heaven affianced, false to God, who tries
 All spirits ; and this, from its own ruin at last,
 Like a flag storm-torn, fluttering from its staff,
 Evanescent, saves. Earth's elements discohere.

*A Gathering of Kings and Peoples.**FESTUS throned ; LUCIFER, and CLARA.*

FESTUS. Princes and Peoples ! Powers once of earth !
 It suits not that I point to ye the path
 I trode to reach this sole supreme domain—
 This mountain of all mortal might. Enough,
 That I am monarch of the world—the world.
 Let all acknowledge loyally my laws,
 And love me as I them love. It will be best.
 No rise against me can stand. I rule of God ;
 And am God's sceptre here. Think not the world
 Is greater than my might—less than my love—
 Or that it stretcheth further than mine arm.
 Kings ! ye are kings no longer. Cast your crowns
 Here—for my footstool. Every power is mine.
 Nobles ! be first in honour. Ye, too, lose
 Your place, in place : retrieve yourselves in good.
 Peoples ! be mighty in obedience.
 Let each one labour for the common weal.
 Be every man a people in his mind.
 Kings—nobles—nations ! love me and obey.
 I need no aid—no arms. Burn books—break swords !
 The world shall rest, and moss itself with peace.

KINGS. Tyrant, we love thee not ! and we as one
 Man will resist thee.

FESTUS. Well I know it. Mark !
 Ye are all nations, I a single soul.
 Yet shall this new world order outlast all.
 Behold in me the doomsman of your race.
 Will, reason, passions, all shall serve and aid,

Yea your most secret qualities and powers.
 Not by the mandate of the mass as wont,
 In times gone by for aye, to mark the elect
 Of popular will ; not by sublime descent
 From conquering kings, sit I here ; but of God
 Called, and of wise men's wisdom, and the force
 Supreme of reason, and law of serving love
 Intituled and acknowledged, name me lord.

NOBLES. Reason rebels against thee, and condemns
 Tyrant and slave alike ; exalting this,
 Deposing that, adjusting all ; as yet
 Hope we and mean to do with thee and these.

FESTUS. And seek ye to gainstand the faith in God ?
 O blindest rulers ! will ye never learn
 Your proper region and due dominance ?
 Whatever ye rule, I rule over you.
 All unobstructed power is sanctified.
 Divine rule is a tyranny of good.
 Mine shall be like it. Tyrant ! Well ; I am.
 I glory in the title ; reverence
 Myself, for that it is accorded me.

What is above this soul of mine but heaven ?
 How was it I came here ? By royal birth
 From fatherly despots ? Was't by stealthy stride,
 Ambition's wont ? Or, by the sycophant pace
 Of popular patriot ? Or the earth-shaking march
 Of militant states ? By nothing save the step
 Dawnlike of mental light, led on by souls
 Of moral majesty whose noble faith
 And peaceful polity our social sphere
 Thus amiably progressing, proves the hopes
 Of all earth's good and sage in ages passed
 Prophetic ripening to fulfilment, man
 His own and unacknowledged lord, enthroned,
 The world round ; prelude of his great return
 Godwards, and Heaven regained, his final home.

PEOPLES. The opposite of rule divine is best
 For man. Power gives temptation, which in turn
 Sets aside honour, social duty, law,
 And right ; creates abuse, and abuse strife,
 Confusion, retribution, bloodshed, sin.
 Though for a season cloud and meteor, sign
 Of transient action midst eternal calm,
 Usurp the heights of air, yet soon the stars
 Their peaceful reign resume ; and now at last,
 Since earth hath wiser waxed, the people theirs.
 Therefore descend thou and make room for us ;
 Or else thy powers submit to perfect proof,
 And our approval, ratified by all.

LUCIFER. These are the proud divisors of times passed,
 Brought forward to futurity : the seed
 Of souls which live to sow dissension ; souls

Who would suspend upon a cable's strand,
 A continent of cavil. Go, good friends.
 A mightier contest than ye dream, and like
 To task all craft acuminous, waits ye yet.
 While hangs the world together, these lack not.

FESTUS. Nations ! behold the day of gladness, long
 Craved by all righteous souls, the day of peace,
 The feast-day of the Eternal. Sun, main, sky,
 Beaming each one with God's reflected love,
 Their vast content, united, smile. And now
 When in these times, earth's latest days, the sea,
 His ancient sites revindicate, reigns supreme
 O'er all time's storied states, and powers renowned
 Of antique policy, heirless empires, cleansed
 By God's liege element from the blood of wars,
 Sacred and most iniquitous, at the shrines
 Poured, of false gods, to this terrene upheaved
 Freshliest, and counter-shadowy, where young earth
 Unannalled, undefiled, demands as dower
 The mighty and immaculate future ; now
 When heaven round other star than sung of old
 Rolls peaceful ; star of conquered death, the lyre's
 Bright paramount ; when, with swift and easy shock,—
 As toiling traveller from his shoulder shifts
 Towards the day's end, his burthen,—earth shakes off
 Her overpoise of old beliefs and stale
 Traditions ; and with slope celestial trimmed
 To happier influences,—still find we things,
 Conform to reason most, by the mass most spurned ;—
 Sad leaven of our original self-defect.

PEOPLES. This newest order of things us suits not.

FESTUS. Nay,

Ask not how long 'twill last. Meanwhile, enjoy ;
 Reap all the harvest peace and power can give
 Freedom and nature perfected. Let all
 Good plans benevolence longs to realize,
 Not yet accomplished be achieved. For what
 Beside, were boundless power, and peace assured,
 One only polity, one sole faith ?

PEOPLES. We trow not.

We, more than half, throw back the whole thou'dst give ;
 Want not thy boons, nor thee ; would say farewell.

LUCIFER. Their honey smacks of rue, or I mistake.

FESTUS. Man's conscience is an angel or a fiend,
 According to his deeds. What have I done ?

I was the youngest born of destiny,
 The favourite of fate, and fortune's heir ;
 My word for once was law and prophecy.
 Speak, spirit ! have I forfeited my star ?

LUCIFER. Storms give to dust a privilege to rise,
 And fly in all men's faces—even kings' !

PEOPLES. Monarch, thou rulest nought. We will thee not.

FESTUS. What if a million molehills were to league
 Their meannesses together, with due pomp,
 And to some mountain say,—In the name of God !
 Whither dost thou aspire ? Does any deem
 That great imperial creature would descend
 From those sublimest solitudes of air,
 Where it had dwelt in snowy sanctity,
 For ages, ere the mud-made world below
 Was more than half conceived, to parley there
 At its own footstool, and lay down its crown,
 And elemental commune with the skies,
 Because its height was so intolerable,
 And its supremacy termed tyranny ?
 Why look ye all amot ? Is doomsday come ?
 Stand forth, and speak, sole servant of my throne !
 If aught thou hast to settle and explain
 Or straightway send these nations to their homes.

PEOPLES. Our home is where we rule and are content.

LUCIFER. Ye mighty once—ye many weak, give ear !
 I and my god—for god he sure must be,
 In human form, who sitteth there enthroned—
 For readier rule, and for the good of all,
 Have cast again the dynasties of earth
 According to the courses of the air :
 Therefore, from east, and west, and north, and south,
 Four kings ministrant element-like shall bend
 Before his feet. Hearken, thou unkinged crowd !
 Ye have not sought the good of those ye governed.
 The people only for the people care.
 Ye seem to have thought earth but a ball for kings
 To play with : rolling the royal bauble, empire,
 Now east—now west. Your hour and power is past.
 Ye are the very vainest of mankind,
 As loftiest things weigh lightest. Ye are gone !
 Nations, away with them ! Nor do ye boast !
 Ye find that power means not good, not bliss.
 But ye would wed delusion :—now, ye know her.
 And she is yours for life—and death—and judgment.
 There is no power, nor majesty, save his :
 His is the kingdom of the world and glory.
 His throne is founded centre-deep by heaven ;
 And the whole earth doth bless him, and approve
 With proud assent, one-minded. As the sun
 Fresh risen from hallowing waters which his touch
 In turn reconsecrates, by slow ascent,
 Persistent, but inevitable, assumes
 The zenith, and in judgment throned, his seat,
 As standard of all height, gives earth, gives heaven,
 To each the same scale, this, your liege, for you
 For all, lays down one perfect level law,
 His will ; and he, at will, will turn the world,
 As light turns earth round. Greet your lord, and go.

FESTUS. All silent ! Do they understand ?

LUCIFER.

Why, yes ;

They hold thy gain, their loss ; that's all.

FESTUS.

O men !

O brethren ! deathless mortals, hear me once !—

Listen, ye nations ! would ye learn how stands
Your great accompt with those, earth's choice, who me
Have chosen, attend, while I times passed unfold,
Time present, times to come. Men all are born
To serve or rule ; no harm, if they who rule
Most, the most serve. To this end I, self-vowed,
Elect of heaven, casting in mind how best
I could man benefit ; and soul-grieved to know
Of doubts that in one's fellows' hearts and ours
Dare wretchedly God's being ignore, oft mouthed
By mock philosophy, I, self-sworn to seek
All truth through nature, region none of life,
Inner or outer spared ; while through all forms
Material, through the world's broad elements,
All science, graduating, have traced ; and joyed,
My way, through fires sphere-cored, the hearth of things
And the atlantéan axis of the world,
Where played time's brood, archaic, fought ; air's heights,
And all the undescribed circumference,
Where earth's thick breath thins off to blankest space,
Scaled ; ocean's stormy baptistery, world-walled,
Sounded, and trode the high exhilarant snows,
Sparkling like star-dust ; while all form extreme
Of socialty, rude, polished, tested, I
One sense of law, in all, one law of right
Finding, one sanctity of blood, proof sure
To man of like rise, end ; and while in all
These elements of conclusion joyed to trace
All-where, the god-print of one bounteous hand
Omnific, predisposant : nor, less proof,
Marking of power than love ; to view o'er all
Spread the wide wing of God propitiable,
Answerer of prayer, inspirer ; in all need
The Lord of provident goodness, by pure hearts
Neared only, and spirit imbued with love of God
And man ; a spirit which, sinning, seeks through faith
And penitence, re-access to him the One
Invariable, whose wordless name, as taught
By him, all orders of existence serves
To fraternize, all worlds, all souls unites ;
Nor, labouring to this end, though pleased to see
Science, in all her walks, keep step with faith,
Each purifying the other, can soul content,
Through nature's sensible rudiments to have passed
Fruitless, unless in heart, grace-taught ; but aye
Wretched to view faith's vast divergences,
Once only true 'mong men, to me it came,

As duty and end inspired, to seek in all
 The essential verity which, to each germane,
 All linking, permeated. This hoped, through all
 Soul-culture of the passed, and sacred creeds,
 Initiative on earth of life divine,
 From earliest days,—whose ruinous relics still
 Astound, not, sole, through many a faith extinct,
 I pilgrim-wise have toiled, but many a fane
 Now silent, solitary, save by the sun
 Uneyed, unvisited, save by the elements,
 With patient foot have trodden ; in rock-slabbed tomb,
 For the living built as though to expiate sins
 Titanic ; cell sepulchral midst the moor
 For penitence reared or rites regenerative
 Of aspirant soul ; in stony ark on hill
 Piled giant-wise, have knelt, heart-racked, to wring
 From those dumb rocks their secret, petrified
 Long years since, what their stone of fate, hard by,
 And intersecting circles of good and ill,
 Mutation, destiny, life, imported ; chair
 Piacular, scooped from cliff wherein to outwatch
 The moon, or trace some fateful birth-star end
 Its skiey arc, oft rapturous pressed ; in these,
 Fanes roofless, wandering, stretched o'er heathy downs,
 And pillared crags ranged rudely ring-wise, rough,
 Shapeless, or shaped like clouds, men's first essay
 To circumscribe the infinite, and one spot
 Make holier than the rest where God is all ;
 Have bowed me 'neath the mystic moon, and prayed
 Before the altar, hoary, meteoric, once
 Encrowned with fire the flood quenched ; and these quit
 For Parian shafted shrines, shrines such as born
 To mount Pentelic, parent of white fanes,
 Commemorate in earth's choicest lore, to light,
 To wisdom, sacred, to heaven's Lord ; or such,
 Columnar as illumine the broadening sands
 Round Tchelminar or Balbeck, to the sun,
 Hallowed of old ; and thence to those cross-based
 Which cloudward towered, or domed, here consecrate
 The principle of divine self-sacrifice,
 Passing, have in them all, all found, at core,
 Identic ;—heart prostrate with hand uplift,
 Professed man's creed eternal ;—God is God ;
 Nought else ; the Infinite, the Eternal, one ;
 All provident nature is his prophet ; man
 His son from him first issuant back returns
 To him by virtue, and moral light ; his law
 Is pure and righteous ; in its practice, peace,
 Wisdom, salvation are. He, God, is love ;
 But just both when he punishes and forgives.
 Him fear, obey, love, worship. Of all faiths
 The essence thus in mine own spirit summed

In fanes both old and new, I, with all rites,
The world-presiding deity, dared to adore,
And knew such service acceptable ;—nor less
That God's name ye might know as Love, not Fear ;
That hope and not despair might rule your souls
Conceptive of the future life ; that war
Earth's vastest curse might cease, and peace the path
Prepare of justice, know, my task hath been,
By secret rites and sacred, many a year,—
As might a river subterrene through caves
Abysmal, issue sunwards seek—to gain
Such light of truth as, lightening soul, might all
Advantage in the scale of being ; with sense
Of wisest justice competent to reframe
On base right equitable man's social life ;
With saving trust in God, the infinite mind,
Simplest of faiths and the sole true ; with arms
Of purest piety in prayer's fervent fires
Wrought indestructible, so to encrown man's soul
That nought of good, save angelhood, scarce remains
For men to attain, that, well nigh reached ; and helped
By sagest souls who, operating unseen
As nature's forces, in one law supreme
Have wrought of faith and life, and all good ends
Knotting in one, in me have all success
Crowned ; and all this for you.

PEOPLES. Thee, king of earth,
We want not, nor await we thy projects.
War when we would, and when war-wearied, peace ;
Fair conquest and fair risk we rather love
Than peace enforced, forced union.

FESTUS. Ye who speak
Are not the whole.

PEOPLES. We are most.

FESTUS. Alas for man !

No hope. This grand reunion lasts no more
Than my day. Seer, sage, saint, have wrought in vain.
Thought's pettiest differences are cherished more
Than truth's most vast congruities. In vain
It seems, to have oped the way to truth, and peace,
And reason's sacred cabinet, wherein all
Earth's wise might make their conclave, and the world
Rule bodily, spiritually ; in vain to have passed
Through pains and perils without end, to earn
For man the attainable results he spurns ;
Peace universal, one pure simple faith,
Through lifts of soul, successive, whence its view
Widened and purified can clearer hold
Manhood's test, virtue ; and for all inspired
With love their kind to enlighten, and with proof
Perfective of each soul to serve its race
By loving God, and well-doing.

PEOPLES.

Be it so.

Good will we not by these means to such end.

OTHERS. We, king, we homage thee. In thee content,
We hail the great designs of God fulfilled.

Thee for no other end than man to serve,

Enlighten, free in mind, he here hath placed.

Thee for our joy, our perfectness we take,

Our seal of earth's companionship with heaven ;

Our hope and our accomplished proof of good.

His laws the only miracles being knows,

And these because from nothingness his will

Evoked them ; matter powerless, lawless ; time,

Extent, life, mind, the infinite whole his own

Blessed spirit diffused through space, and made all good.

FESTUS. Knowledge re-ones now with belief, while men

Deem diversely of lesser ends, God's law

Moral and natural, through man's mean evolved,

Or demonstrate, him shows like kind and wise.

The world hath but just now full use attained

And seisin of its happiest privilege ;

For as one who unremembering somewhat seeks

He hath never truly lost, and at last knows

Haply in his hand or bosom, so the world,

God seeking, finds but in those inner heavens,

That peaceful and perfectible nature, man

Long missed, but, recollective, in his breast

Divinely implaced perceives ; and now, of self

Recognizant, by true means, ends true achieves.

LUCIFER. Be it ! If peace content not mighty man,

What can ? For as the people cannot rule

Themselves, so neither may a crowd of kings.

And hence hath been the evil of the world ;

Now ceased for ever. War will be no more.

His is the sway of social sovereign peace.

His tyranny is love and good to all.

His is the vice-royed, vouchsafed, reign of God.

FESTUS. What wouldst thou angel-guard ? for I feel thee near.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Mortal, the end draws nigh. Prepare ! For
thus

God justifies his ways and manifests

His equitable forecounsel, told in heaven.

FESTUS. O men, O brethren, turn your souls to God.

LUCIFER. Why wish the world's conversion ? Men have choice
Of evil and good ; have e'er had ; ever will ;

Even these whose souls are yet unmade. Right soon,

God will fulfill his thousands known from first ;

Whose apex soul alone is lacking, thine.

Depart, ye nations !

FESTUS. Hold ! I yet must speak

One word of hope to inspirit those most sad,

Most sage, who hold not with the noisier mass,

Aggressive ever, unsatiate of all good ;

Adjure all by their better selves, and show
All, that, mayhap, not all know.

LUCIFER. Time is passed
For teaching.

FESTUS. Fields ripen even while we reap.
One glad and glorious prospect beams o'er earth.
As when from victory won, a people long
By foreign foes oppressed, true grasp regained
Of popular right, or claim, gathering, elate
At peace thus earned, and potent place resumed
In nature's order, ordered freedom, meet
In their mid capital ; thrills through thickening throngs
One multitudinous heart ; from breast to breast
In lightning leaps, the spirit of freedom bounds,
Instant, ubiquitous, as through echoing skies
The fulminant fire-cloud, self-diffusive, throbs
With thunderous pulsations, aweing earth :
So here ; make glad ye many : joy to view,
Monarchs ! your reconcile nations, not
By pairs, nor triads, but by imbanded states,
Embrace commutual : one in godliest will,
In chivalrous fealty, to uplift the low ;
To enrich the poor ; the weak protect ; you, priests !
No longer prompt, as through time passed, to bless
With waters thrice unhallowed, war's red flags ;
Kneeling do homage, joyful, for man's sake,
To this pure banner solitary which floats
In repetitive signs round earth, of peace ;
Fruit of one common worship, practice, creed ;
You too, rejoice ye masses ! mean no more
By frightful frivolousness, but wistful now,
Of life's great ends, and the soul's worthiest aims,
As by your wisest taught, and hallowed most
By your kind Maker, kinder Saviour, judge
Kindest, of all man's kind ; earth's meanest wight,
Self ranked in the host of good, 'gainst evil arrayed,
A spirit is, sage, seer ; proud to obey earth's law,
Like just with Heaven's, extensible through all works,
Soul elevative : him, therefore, on this throne,
Broad axis of humanity's moral sphere,
Seated, serene ; in whom ye reign ; your chief,
Your chosen champion 'gainst the great ones gone ;
Kinglyings who mount their lineage to false gods,
While we, and all our lieges, but to the true,
One single generation ; one descent ;
Godlings, there prostrate, with their blood-bought crowns
And trampled peoples ; him, ye lowly, hail,
Ye lofty ; loftiest he of all in place ;
Lowliest in heart ; him hail, in whom alone,
All sanctions concentrate ; the elect of God :
Of his own will ; and earth's one-minded choice
Humanity rules ; reign peace, and piety reign ;

Rule, reign, which all ones with God's rule more dread.

PEOPLES. O man our king, live ever. Be thy days
As are the days of Heaven, a thousand years.

'Tis in thy life, thine only life, we live,

And by thy name, most mighty soul, we swear.

LUCIFER. So be it. They bow their heads in sign to obey,
But 'tis the bow of death.

FESTUS. Hark, fiend ! dost hear
That sound as of a deep and world-wide sigh
Tempestuous, sweeping upwards, as it stills ?

LUCIFER. Ay, 'tis the death-groan of the sons of men ;
Thy subjects, king !

FESTUS. Why hadst thou this so soon ?

LUCIFER. It is God who brings about all this ; not I.
Truly, Death leaves a sweeping swathe. Mark, now,
Heaven's law, and earth's, how just ! what time's for these
If sinners were among them, as I deem
Might be, if I my memory closely raked,
Condignly to repent, and keep that law
Of penitence, thou wast told, subserves all spheres ?

FESTUS. I know not. God is merciful, as just.
Not yet, it may be, time hath ceased with these,
I am not ready—and—it shall not be !

LUCIFER. I cannot help it, monarch ! and—it is !
Hast not had time for good ?

FESTUS. One day—perchance.

LUCIFER. Then hold that day as an eternity.

FESTUS. All around me die. The earth is one great death-
bed.

LUCIFER. Time's tide is nearly out, and sick folk die.

FESTUS. Oh ! worst, oh wretchedest of woes, of wrong's
Of time's disasters. Thou of all at last
Worst, cruellest. As some tyrant storm, of sea
And sky the usurpful scion, strives to tear,
Unnatural, from the brow of towering crag
Its crown ice-peaked, far glittering ; but repulsed,
Baffled, discomfited, howling, mainward vaults,
His mean revenge to wreak, wrathful, on foe
More passive ; and days three the indignant deep
Lashing, with rage accumulant hour by hour,
His track betrayed by fulminant fires within,
Breaks on Britannic coasts, whitening for leagues
The Atlantic ; and e'er fiercer far than first
When he his birth-world left, with his last breath,
And death-blast most of all convulsive, wrecks,
With ruinous vehemence, fleets and fields and towns,
So thou, great fiend ! dost last of all thy worst.

LUCIFER. But these thou seest shall rise again for good,
Or ill, each one in ghostly personalty.

FESTUS. But just,
Cut off, untimely, all should choose. See, now.

CLARA. Oh ! save me, Festus ! I have fled to thee,

Through all the countless nations of yon dead—
 For well I knew it was thou who sattest there,
 To die with thee, if that thou art not death :
 And if thou wert, I would not shrink from thee.
 I am thine own, own Clara !

FESTUS. Thou art safe !
 Here in the holy chancel of my heart—
 The heavenly end of this our fleshly fane,
 I hold thee to communion. Rest thee safe.

CLARA. Men thought I was an angel, as I passed ;
 And caught up at my feet—but I 'scaped all.
 I knew I should die by thee : the soul that loves
 Soul-wise alone gives forth true oracles.

FESTUS. Then there is faith among these mortals yet.
 Thy beauty cometh first, and goeth last—
 Willow-like. Welcome !

CLARA. Oh ! I am so happy !

FESTUS. I speak of thee as of the dead ;—the dead
 Are always faithful.

CLARA. I will stay with thee—
 Though angels beckon—may I ? Let me, love !
 I dare not—cannot, take mine eyes from thee,
 For fear of looking on the dead. Dear Festus !
 I think of thee as when I loved thee first ;
 For all time since, even as the ebbing sea
 Falls in its rise, and loses in its gain,
 My heart ne'er passed that hour. It soothes me now.

FESTUS. Well, too, I mind me of that day ; a day
 Fragrant from first to last with sunny flowers ;
 Of cloudless light, of cloudless love ; it passed :
 Eve came ; the dewy night stole forth, dim-veiled ;
 Arcturus, heavenly oxherd, bowed his knee
 Star-cusped, upon the hill, as though with all
 His worlds he worshipped God ; his conquering head
 Bowed 'neath the orb-gemmed crown, hollow with heaven,
 God o'er him holds as one who had striven with God,
 And gained the day o'er deity. Oh ! no more !
 Shall we not mind us of that day in heaven ?
 Thou art the only one hast answered me,
 Love to love—life to life.

CLARA. Oh ! I am dying !
 The heavens are pressing down upon me. God
 My father seeks the spirit of his child.

FESTUS. Go, golden lily, bloom thou on the breast
 Of everlasting sanctity.

CLARA. Farewell !
 Give me one kiss—the kiss of life and death—
 The only taste of earth I will take to heaven.
 Here ! let me die, die in it !

FESTUS. Last and best !
 Now am I one again. Oh ! memory runs
 To madness, like a river to the sea.

These long illustrious tresses, gold of gold,
 Yea, very gold of very gold, which here
 Insult all thought of limit; to my touch
 Dearer than were the sceptre of the sun,
 Wave me no more bright welcome; and these lips
 Whose animated silence sweetlier told
 Than talk of other angel, move no more
 In silence or in sound; these bright brown eyes,
 Still as extinguished stars, no more reflect
 The virtues of the heavens. Man's world of old,
 Began with woman, mother of all life;
 And, after countless ages, now, with thee,
 Bride of my soul, death's youngest daughter, friends.
 Our union is, and hath been, most in mind,
 That perfect, yea, that hallowed; and I end,
 As I began, sole as the sun in heaven.
 Happy as heaven have I, love, been with thee!
 Thine innocent heart hath passed through a pure life,
 Like a white dove, wing-sunned through the blue sky.
 A better heart God never saved in heaven.
 She died as all the good die—blessing—hoping.
 There are some hearts aloe-like, flower once, and die
 And hers was of them.—Thrall art thou and free:
 Free of immortal life though bound of death.
 Not the emotional surface of the sea,
 Whose form from things without is ta'en, but more
 The deep essential quiet of its bed,
 Thy soul resembled in the pure profound.
 Thy love to me was as the morning dew,
 Earth's liquid jewellery, wrought of air,
 Young nature's christening; whose every bead,
 Round as the globular genesis of things,
 And bright as heaven's own gems in diamond set,
 Emblemed its pure perfection o'er this heart;
 Now sun parched, thunder scorched; yet stricken thus,
 Feeling myself each hour, each pulse-beat drawn,
 More mightily drawn, to join and glory in
 All being's everlasting sense of God.
 I see the universe made clear with light,
 Holy with spirit, pure with deity;
 Man the dear son of God to God returned,
 And earth's renascent nature throned in heaven.
 The voice of ages, syllabled in suns,
 Pronounces God's unceasing benison
 Upon his bright creation. Time is touched
 On all hands by the Eternal: and the world
 Is bounded, rounded, ended but by heaven.
 Therefore the soul, in death resilient, looks,
 Backwards to whence its impulse came, to God;
 And all things lovely and divine that here
 It loved in spirit, are too, with it conjoined,
 And mingled with the future of the stars,

And blissful occupation of all space.
 As, pending time, the passed and future cause
 Chief reasons, and the present but a point,
 So in eternity all's presentness.
 Hence therefore from me now all thoughts of earth ;
 Be they as in a lake of lightning quenched ;
 In lone annihilation lie entombed ;
 And memory's pall be buried with the bier.
 There lies my soul's love : and lo ! all life,—
 In such time as the pale self-flattering moon,
 Who loves to see her likeness in all lakes,
 Hath ta'en, from her first starlike peep above
 The hill, to free wholly her silvery breast,
 Her upper and her lower limbs of light,
 From dark, detentive earth, and, spurned all ties,
 Of all attractions 'sdeignful, southening, soars
 Calm, but unpiteous, heavenward,—life hath ceased ;
 And silence reads the dead world's burial tale.
 And death sits quivering, there, and watering
 His great gaunt jaw at me. When must I die ?

LUCIFER. Say ! dost thou feel to be mortal or immortal ?

FESTUS. Away !—and let me die alone.

LUCIFER. I go :—

And I will come again : but spare thee, now,
 One hour, to think——

FESTUS. On all things. God, my God !

One hour to sum a life's iniquities !—
 One hour to fit me for eternity—
 To make me up for judgment and for God !—
 But one hour, spirit ! to curse thee ! Nay, for that,
 There may be endless hours. God ! I despair,—
 And I am dying. Let me hold my breath !
 I know not if I e'er may draw another.
 I feel death blowing hard at the lamp of life.
 My heart feels filling like a sinking boat ;
 It will soon be down—down. What will 'come of me ?
 It is as I always wished it ;—I shall die
 In darkness, and in silence, and alone.
 Even my last wish is petted. God ! I thank thee ;
 It is the earnest of thy coming—what ?
 Forgiveness ? Let it be so : for I know not
 What I have done to merit endless pain.
 Is pleasure crime ? Forbid it, God of bliss !
 Who spurn at this world's pleasures, lie to God ;
 And show they are not worthy of the next.
 What are thy joys we know not—nor can we
 Come near thee in thy power, nor truth nor justice ;
 The nearest point wherein we come towards thee,
 Is loving—making love—and being happy.
 Thou wilt not chronicle our sandlike sins ;
 For sin is small, and mean, and barren. Good,
 Only, is great, and generous, and fruitful.

Number the mountains, not the sands, O God !
 God will not look as we do on our deeds ;
 Nor yet as others. If he more condemn,
 Shall he not more approve ? A few fair deeds
 Bedeck my life, like gilded cherubs on
 A tomb, beneath which lies dust, decay, and darkness.
 But each is better than the other thinks.
 Thank God ! man is not to be judged by man ;—
 Or, man by man the world would damn itself.
 What do I see ? It is the dead. They rise
 In clouds ! and clouds come sweeping from all sides,
 Upwards to God : and now they all are gone—
 Gone, in a moment, to eternity.
 But there is something near me.

SPIRIT.

It is I.

FESTUS. Go on ! I follow, when it is my time.
 Not perfect yet the complement of heaven.
 There is no shadow on the face of life :
 It is the noon of fate. Why may not I die ?
 Methinks I shall have yet to slay myself.
 I am calm now. Can this be the same heart
 Which slept when sleep it did from dizziness,
 And pure rapidity of passion, like
 The centre circle of the whirlpool's wheel ?
 The earth is breaking up ; all things are thawing.
 River and mountain melt into their atoms ;
 A little time, and atoms will be all.
 The sea boils ; and the mountains rise and sink
 Like marble bubbles, bursting into death.
 O thou Hereafter ! on whose shore I stand—
 Waiting each toppling moment to engulf me—
 What am I ? Say, thou Present !— say, thou Past !
 Ye three wise children of Eternity !
 A life ?—a death ?—and an immortal ?—all ?
 Is this the threefold mystery of man ?
 The lower, darker Trinity of earth ?
 It is vain to ask. Nought answers me—not God.
 The air grows thick and dark. The sky comes down.
 The sun draws round him streaky clouds, like God
 Gleaning up wrath. Hope hath leapt off my heart,
 Like a false sibyl, fear-smote, from her seat,
 And overturned it. I am bound to die.
 Why wait, then, here, as an o'erfreighted cloud,
 Abandoned by its lightlier winged convoy,
 Lags, in some shadowy hollow of the hills,
 Scapeless, till death, how dilatory ! dissolve.
 God ! why wilt thou not save ? The great round world
 Hath wasted to a column beneath my feet.
 I will hurl me off it, then ; and search the depth
 Of space, in this one infinite plunge ! Farewell !
 To earth, and heaven and God ! Doom ! spread thy lap ;
 I come—I come. But no ! may God forbear,

To judge the tempted purpose of my heart !
Me hath he stablished here, and he will save ;
And I can smile destruction in the face.
Let his strong hand compress the marble world,
And wring the starry fire-blood from its heart ;
Still on this earth-core I rejoice in God ;
I know him and believe in him as Love,
And this divinest truth he hath inspired,
Mercy to man is justice to himself.
To have held the truth is something, maybe. Yes !
As when in time's remote, even life's gay youth,
Adventurous, tramping upland tracts, towards eve,
Following the sun from rise to rise we spring,
And clearing just this eminence now, now that,
Stretch quick our stride, and hold him yet in heaven,
Nor let depart till certain quite he has marked
As cognizant witness, how we have toiled to keep
His golden company, so one sole truth
God in the soul, attested, glorified,
Pursued through life, I feel, hold still at last
Supreme, consolatory. It lights me here ;
And will, till nature's night. But now compute
Thy deeds unwise, thy wasted times and means,
Disservice of the pure, the true, and judge
Thyself condemnable, if in part alone ;
Judge justly, judge impartially. But how ?
Like to the mighty leaves of light, shook off
Autumnal from the tree of time, which strew
In stormy incandescence the sun's heart,
My thoughts, confusedly burning, waste away
This world-enlightener. Soul, what hast thou done ?
Hast brought forth a new God, or all the heavens
Stripped of their shining shams and shown the true ?
Earth's spiritual idols hurled to hell ?
Behold them, ghosts of gods, the evanishing reek
Of lights extinguished. I have seen them all
Huddled in Hades ; lives that live no more,
Fast fading into sheer nonentity.
Hast thou, with all things granted to thy wish,
Wrought out thy sovereign end, to warm the world
To worship, love, pure life, thy solar will ?
Thy heaven-wide mark, thine universal aim ?
Alas ! how futile action weighed 'gainst thought !
What mountainlike conceptions swell the mind !
What monumental molehills we achieve !
O grief, O woe, that I so much have thought
Of self ; of God so little. Yet to know
Him, holy, gracious, giver of all good,
Forgiver of all evil, were surely enough
To sate the insatiable. In him we rest,
Our spiritual universe, in him
Move, as the self-revolving orbs in heaven,

And O ! thou strange mysterious universe,
 Eternal, unconceived, star-studded heaven,
 Who art in God, and God in thee ; and we
 Of both, and in both, sovereign slaves of law,
 Founded we know not or by whom, or how ;
 Canst thou not aid us to conceive ourselves,
 Atoms of thine entirety, double-natured,
 But powerless separate, seeing only this ;
 Matter, if indestructible, always was,
 And aye must be ; mind, too, if force defined ;
 And though immortal both, yet vital only
 And individual, when by laws combined ?
 What then ? Are unintelligent laws alone
 The rulers of the universe, and God
 A metaphysic fiction ; am I God ;
 As bud, tree rudimental ? As a seal's
 Reverse impression, signifying yet
 One only meaning, spelling one same word ?
 As part material, objective to God ?
 As immaterial, subjective with him ?
 As thus, of both symbolic, in myself,
 An abstract of the infinite, the whole ?
 No difference 'tween the all and God, but this,
 Active and passive deity ! O man !
 O sacred nature, all divine ! In vain
 We seek more light than that we see by. Nought
 Explaineth death but death, nor life but life ;
 Whether perpetuate in more brilliant spheres,
 Or fined and heightened simply into heaven ;
 Communion with the spirit of infinite life,
 All present reason, and eternal right,
 Hailed by each natural mind as God, the good,
 The wise, the holy, the all-blessing. Hence,
 God is to man both God unknown and known.
 The known we love ; but the unknown, although
 We name it non-existent, still we fear ;
 And fearing everything, fear nothing most.
 As 'mid sky-crowning halo, the wan moon,
 Like an enchantress in her charmed ring,
 By recusant dæmons scared, her wheel of light
 Widens, to fend her from wind-striding storms,
 Threatful of death, in vain ; she knows all ; sees
 The coming cloud which blots her out of heaven ;
 So, too, my soul, affrayed, but firm, foreknows
 The fatal end of all things. Yet, why fear ?
 Great nature is my mother and my friend ;
 When God comes down from heaven he dwells with her.
 Hers is the house of mourning and of mirth ;
 Feasting and fasting go on side by side ;
 The song of bridals and the dirge of death,
 And wail of birth, are aye beneath her roof.
 She brings her children to their father's knee.

These he rebukes, rewards those ; judges all.
 To all he shows their union with himself,
 And those he loves best, takes, from time to time,
 Back to his heavenly hall. Thus, now we know,
 As 'tween the sun and earth lights spectral bond
 Proves both like-essenced, concrete of one force
 Reduplicate, parental ; so we find
 The elemental thoughts of God and man
 One ; the same self-constituent truths are ours.
 Ours is his justice, his our love, though based
 On grander and more sure foundations ; heaven
 We share in doing good and willing well ;
 In blessing, bettering, pardoning others here,
 His universal throne.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Go, reign with him.

FESTUS. My confessor art thou, O God, alone.
 Soon all the shows of nature shall depart,
 And nought not one with deity, goodness, love,
 Peace, righteousness, and divine humanity,
 Yea, nought but the eternal be for aye.
 He his hand opened and the world was born.
 He shuts it, and the essential nothingness
 Embodied, dies its everlasting death,
 The infinite conclusion of all things.
 Open thine arms, O death ! thou fine of woe,
 And warranty of bliss ! I feel the last
 Red mountainous remnant of the earth give way.
 The stars are rushing upwards to the light ;
 My limbs are light, and liberty is mine.
 The spirit's infinite purity consumes
 The sullied soul. Eternal destiny
 Opens its bright abyss. I am God's !

God.

Man, die !

XLVII.

The skies, the skies reclaim us. Earth dissolved,
 God's will prevails now sole. As when o'er vast
 And shoreward flats at murkiest noon of night,
 No single element, not high heaven, not earth,
 Not sea is visible; one wide searching wind,
 Sign solitary of life, blows; blows; so sweeps
 Through death's unsubstanced state, God's vital thought.
 He, as he will, builds, rebuilds; but to all
 Create, most just, the soul-world opes, that time
 Foreclosed, unthought of men, as by some huge
 Judgment self-wrought of nature, each spirit might make
 Of evil or good, preponderant choice. Behold
 The war all souls must wage; war justified
 By God, prefixed; for good fought; war divine;
 War spiritual; war heavenly:—and because
 The good forgive the evil, all justice done,
 God too forgives the good; and hope weds joy.
 After inferior nature is subdued
 The all-evil see confined. Earth's elements
 Conglobe themselves from chaos, purified.

The Skies.

ANGELS, ANGEL OF EARTH, LUNIEL, GUARDIAN ANGEL, FESTUS,
 LUCIFER.

PHANUEL. The age of matter consummate, Heaven decrees
 All things that are shall end, save that is God's.
 As with one world so shall it be with all;
 For all false, human, fallible, as towards
 Creator, creature must be, while defect
 Of separate life their being vitiates, are.
 Prepare ye not the less for all at last,
 Grade upon grade of glory, sons of God!

ANGELS. May we, our Lord and thine who through thy lips
 Us warneth of the coming, know our souls,
 Ministrant, but to effect His loveable will,
 Whose will is righteous reason, ruled supreme,
 Live, and but live to obey, in joy.

ANGEL OF EARTH. One sphere
 Yon prophet of perdition, who saw not
 In it destroyed, his own discomfiture,
 Space lacks already; and life the great retreat
 Begins.

ANGELS. Thy hand regenerative, we wait
 Author of all, its place to fill in heaven.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Earth's annals are accomplished, and her
 tale
 Told in the eternal archives, closed for good.
 Behold the ruinous rudiments of a star,
 Once mine; nor let repose in death; but since,
 Tortured and torn by hands malevolent. See!
 Hath any seen discription like to this

Titanic, of an orb's once radiant limbs?

ANGELS. Despair not thou, the nucleate heart still is,
Doubtless : and, purified, may yet revive.

LUNIEL. Meanst thou yon mass unsphered, suspense 'tween
heaven's

Calm upward, and these detrimental deeps,
Down dragging, all destructive, part without
Mine orbit, part within ; was that once earth ?
I see no feature, like.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Ah, yes ! not quite
Void, yet, of nature's cardinal shapes, each hour
Tending to wonted settlements, waiting still
The word compulsory, quickening, to reform ;
Or, to disperse, permissive, earth it was.

LUNIEL. Seems something wanting to perfection. Lacks
Force, may be for inception of new worlds ;
Lacks will ; perchance mislike feels deity towards
That mould of being.

ANGEL OF EARTH. I go. Earth ! man, farewell.

LUNIEL. One moment, angel, fold thy wing. Stay yet
Thy star-flight ; and,—if gained God's leave, while thus
Collegued, we parle, we, hosts ubiquitous, soon
Eradiated, to part, on quests divine,
From this spot, God's now presence central makes
To the whole unlimited,—say, we all would know
Who circling with the whirlwind of our wings
Yon rude compost, the earth, have, curious, marked,—
What mean these grouped below us ; that side, fiend,
And man, this ? this triumphant, that abject ?
What, too, yon guardian spirit, hovering near ?
Why silent all in God ? To most it bodes
Mystery ; nor me can these, consociate here,
But for the hour, from spheres far off, inform
Touching events strange, vast, late happed in heaven.
Speak, friendliest spirit ; for, when thine orb, dispersed
In fiery fragments, lessening more and more
By self-resolvent forces from all claim
Cohæsive, robbed my memory of a form
I once so dearly loved, tears so mine eyes
Drowned, grief my heart so panged. I fled ; yes, far
Space-winged, fled that world-wrack. But now say
Ere yet, sweet angel-ward of earth, thou joimest
Again, thy charge, say, heard not I resound
Late on those æry shores, the shock of war ?
For view I might not, since the sun's bright ball
Rayless, upon his ebon throne, the void,
Between me and this dread combat intervened ?

ANGEL OF EARTH. War, Luniel ? Yes ! I there. Not I could
quit

Even earth's ashes : nor was't for me to shrink
From sharing all her woe. Nor only this
Knew I, but all predestined in the passed ;

The hostile forces, good and evil, each
 Head in man's spirit contentious, wisely framed
 For advance perpetual, conflict consecrate
 By virtue's laws whose powers preponderant tend
 Through nature, Godwards ; if to ill devote
 Wrenched therefore culpably 'gainst God's end,—and all
 To that grand crisis pertinent, whose just
 Effect, as earth with heaven reharmonized,
 Foretold, we have yet to see. Meanwhile, be sure
 'Twas a fair foughten fight, this field of fields.

LUNIEL. Rehearse, dear spirit, this contest, for the sense
 Intense of joy in extreme action makes
 Wish one had there been.

ANGEL OF EARTH. War unmatched in time ;
 Holiest of wars, and best, the war of good
 'Gainst evil.

PHANUEL. O amiablest of angels, say
 As thou beheldst, it may be, sharedst the strife,
 Its varying course.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Slight part in this was mine,
 O angel of salvation ! but to encheer
 The heaven-prized spirits with hope and holy strength.
 Nor is it I can tell ye best. Behold !
 Couched 'neath yon cloudy precipice, the soul
 War-proven, who watch keeps o'er the conquered fiend,
 Heaven's late antagonist, and earth's ; he, best,
 He, or the fiend, how fared the fight, can say.
 For need I show that in yon prostrate shape,
 Lies evil o'erthrown, its doom from God's just lips
 Here waiting ; not with weak reproach, nor shame
 Boisterous, nor mock contempt ; but as evil sage,
 Not wholly execrable, nor yet to be
 Deemed desperate infinitely ; but aptest sense
 His of necessitate being, and consciousness
 While gaining all his limited ends, of ends
 Wider opposed, his mastering ; we, not he,
 Unless through blind and fluttering instinct, him
 Knowing by alchemy of force divine,
 God's sole will, yet transformable.

LUNIEL. Draw nigh,
 Mortal. And, if I err not, we, ere now.
 Have met, traversed and seen together much.
 Much joy I, that such good conceived hath borne
 In thee, though late enough, fair fruit. And now
 Wouldst me repay for favours passed, or these
 Spirits of amity please ; and if of deeds
 Glorious at once and good, thou lovest to tell
 Not less than aid,—speak on ! that we, informed,
 With all benevolent souls, that joy which crowns
 And sums celestial life may share whene'er,
 And in what spheres soever, through all space
 Good prospers, good in all because of God.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. Approach, my Festus, spirit beloved, nor
fear

Trespass again of evil, nor dread escape
From God's unmeasured grasp. This conflict passed,
Know all ye angels, earth's, with time, with life
Coördinate, and the victory God's, of good.

FESTUS. O heavenly angels, denizens of state
Celestial, pardon ye, if words of mine,
Conceptions human failing to translate,
Fall shorter miserably of minds divine ;
But that ye part, made wise in order due
Of all things, hear, bright spirits this tale in few :
And may the all present, but invisible One,
Inspire me to declare what sole is true !
Ere yet, and this ye wot of, earth attained
Her supreme end, man's race,—so gracious grown
Their instinct of perfection to be gained
In all things, had, in outward life, so won
Comfort refined, and moderate plenty, ease,
Free faith, and learning's temperate luxuries,
That, in self-flattery, they would whisper, none
Of souls create, or kinds to be, unknown,
In social law, weal, polity, might proceed
Further ; scarce 'scaped they angels to become,
In charity and all knowledge. Underneath
This outward life of mind was spirit-death,
Wide spread, not tainting all. Heaven saw the need,—
Here, prophecy and pagan foresight one,—
Of a great purifying strife, the doom
Self-wrought, of woe or bliss, from good or ill
Practised by fallible souls but free, wherein
God's aims they might adopt, or side with sin :
And conscience so with fate, one end fulfil.
Earth's final scenes avails not now to unroll ;
Her agony was o'er, and death's, mine own,
For we had died together : and my soul,
Freed from life's bonds, God's universal throne
Touched instant, and the immaterial whole
Henceforth intuitive grasped ; and knowing, knew
Some all composing purgatorial strife,
Conclusive of all contest passed through life,
Some vast impending struggle foredoomed and due.
Such conflict God permitting for his ends
To be deferred till earth had ceased, outburned,
The bliss of his elect from first decerned,
Secured, that souls all else might prove themselves his friends
Or foes, self-judged ; and ere these hellwards turned,
Those heavenwards, each their principles foreshow
To all their fellow spirits on high, below ;
And if to wisdom's godlier life inclined,
Or ignorance dark and selfish lusts their mind.
I had passed then through death's cloud ; my spirit dilate ;

Like to a flower which suddenly expands
 Seemed with all force fraught fourfold, and the fate
 Of life-worlds trembling in my single hands.
 I looked around ; and though earth's sphere no more
 Loomed 'neath my feet as memory sought, nor wore
 The mask impenetrable she wont before,
 Yet to my spiritual sense seemed all as when
 First conscious, nature knew I, matter, men,
 Save that the elements midst transition seemed
 Somewhat ; incongruous ; bent to interchange ;
 Not friends, not foes, but each to other strange,
 Unfixed, unfinished, as things had but dreamed
 Their passed life over again ; with many a gap
 Of orderly sequence blanked ; faults still, mayhap,
 Of unrecognizant mind ; to be disesteemed.
 Thus, then the prospect stood ; an obscure plain
 Showed spread far out before the face of heaven,
 Where solitude, if generable, once given
 To life, might have presumed an endless reign,—
 When, suddenly, on either hand, arose
 And marvellously, as though compact of air,
 Ere the whole eye were of the fact made 'ware,
 A world in arms, though mixed, instinctive foes.
 Souls, these, humane, which filled earth's every land,
 When death's stern angel, at a sign, life's scroll,
 Stretched 'tween his hands, did ruthlessly uproll ;—
 Not numbered 'mongst the chosen, but free to prove
 By virtuous tests, amenable to love,
 Who, foes of God, would fall, or, friends, would stand ;
 Sufficing thus to vindicate the end
 God in creating free doth aye perpend ;
 That good should master ill ; heaven's hoped for life
 Mere death outworth ; God's peace, all creatural strife,
 For every soul, unwittingly in the passed
 Self-quit or self-condemned,—no proofless plea
 Of faith in carnal gods, no unbased trust
 To magical words or symbols in the eye
 'Vailing, of God the Father, kind as just
 Towards all his children, he uplifting none
 At cost of others ; asking not of one
 More than his strength or light could owe ; this last
 Of all earth's human generations, he
 Mildest of all, as cut off timelessly,
 Would treat. His ways how holy, and how fair !
 Quick as by passion's step, that vast array,—
 By trumpets silver or brazen, which each one told
 Inly, beneath what pennons to repair,
 That either side their visible tongues unrolled,
 Divided, sought its side and took its way.
 Soon, distant hills gleamed with long ranks of foes,
 Illimitable, as sunset lines which bar
 Eve's skies, or sphere broad belted, as for war,

Eager to outlap or with the opponent close :
 Each gorged horizon tremulous with the crowds,
 O'er plain and mount self-urged like armed clouds.
 On either side, two eminences I viewed,
 Tall, ominous, like twin monsters on the plain,
 Fallen brooding. Each vast mound, of arms was reared
 Carnal and spiritual mingled ; bright appeared
 Those, with a sickly polish which by use
 Wears off ; by use, a dazzling hue these gain,
 Intensitive. that of dulness dares accuse
 The glareful lightnings earth midst all her path
 Fronts : and 'tween these the ghostly multitude
 By brotherly love commoved, or scorn, which hath
 With hell fell concert, each, his arms to choose,
 Passed and repassed. Whiles marked I, unconcerned,
 The gathering tempest rolling down the hills,
 And storm of men their hurricane way that burned
 Before them ; and though, time now passed, averse
 From war, and deeming it earth's crowning curse,
 Her worst and least defensible of all ills,
 Yet now it sacred seemed ; and, strange fatality !
 Who should be vanquished, or who victor, while
 My course and choice awaiting to decide,
 Borne in, it seemed, upon me as a tide
 O'erwrothed, that all the blood-feuds which defile
 Earth's annals, were but mocks of this reality,
 Their end, their antitype ; yet, so secure
 My trust in good passed all things framed to endure,
 No fear my heart from steadiest state might lure ;
 Nor mote I marvel more what should create
 Such mighty armaments, should thus draw forth
 Those, as of southern fire-gloom born, with hate
 Hot, these, as storms of splendour from the north
 Issuant, in long keen lines o'er half the earth,
 When I beheld in these commilitant bands
 Men of all faiths, all tongues, all strains, all lands,
 All names ; on that side all co-variants massed
 Votaries of error, falsehood, mystery, each
 Leagued 'gainst the faith on this, earth's first, earth's last ;
 Held by the wise of every age and speech ;
 Which saints sing, angels celebrate and teach,
 God's unity, and his love ; man's deathless soul
 Judged with just mercy ; so that he, the whole,
 Who made, made pure, will ultimately ally
 With him. Not long stood dallying with suspense.
 I, who had 'whither,' alway paired with 'whence,'
 While pondering on man's end, as source, like high ;—
 When, hark ! from form invisible, but close by,
 An angel voice—

GUARDIAN ANGEL. 'Twas I, dear Festus, I,
 Thy soul-ward !

FESTUS. Thou! —cried, 'Arm, for thy defence ;

The idolaters, thy foes, and truth's, appear ;
 And all the hosts of evildom, since life
 Began, revived to wage earth's deadliest strife.
 And, in a moment, ere the anxious eye
 Could glance around, a shadowy hand was near ;
 Dight me in armour ; gave a glittering brand
 Which, lurid as the flash tempestuous heaven
 Hurls to sea, queller of cloud-sundering levin,—
 Shook forth its permanent lightnings in mine hand ;
 Soul-trenchant ; wrought of star-steel which endures,—
 Even as of old the mystic meteor sword,
 By nomad Scythian idolwise adored,—
 No sheath ; its ingrained fire all cloak combures
 Disdainful ; gave this spiky shield ; this spear,
 Floweret of fight, of war's keen crop bright ear :
 Then, vanished visibly. I wordless stand,
 Waiting the approach of some one to dispel
 The mist of doubt upon my spirit that fell.
 While thus I stood expectant, from on high
 Yon angel came,—oh ! can I ever tell
 His guardian love ?—and touching thrice mine eye,
 With force endowed it prism-wise, whereby
 All motives to themselves men justify
 As stimulating their acts, it could disblend,
 Even to their innate elements which the soul,
 With either host, according to their end
 Coördinated, and lawed to sin's control,
 Or virtue's. Thus apprised, I straightways view,
 Who served false gods, if but with piety, drew
 Toward us ; who homaged even the sole and true,
 As hypocrites, sought the enemy ; and so knew,
 God just, self-doomed all. There, with those, I eyed
 All selfish passions, envy, avarice, hate,
 Impiety and impurity close allied,
 Sloth, wrath, intemperance, cruelty and false pride,
 Within the enemy's breast self-generate,
 Each several vice the bad have deified
 Corrupting inwardly ; each contagious side
 To his neighbour's heart infecting. Here, elate,
 The pure determining reasons when I saw,
 The love of God, of mercy, virtue's law,
 Truth, wisdom and their friends impersonate,
 Though fewer than the foe, of loftier state,
 I, as by rational gravitation, sped
 Swift towards the array of light, and made mine own
 The cause they served. No sooner joined, than head
 Stood I, meseemed, o'er all, leave asked of none,
 Nor of sway wishful : for no longer fired
 With love of place pre-eminent as desired
 Erstwhile, nathless these ends my seekers sought
 Prizing, ends virtue sanctioned, wisdom loved,
 To save from error's doom, give heaven its aught,

Predestined ; capture in pure mercy ; win
 The soul self-blinded to the effects of sin
 Godwards ; ends worthy of him, by him approved ;
 And truth's friends :—all resistlessly concurred
 My soul to attract. Their foemen, rebels vile
 Showed, who his rule spurned, scorned his power and word ;
 Strove aye his works to depreciate, defile ;
 Colleague'd to impair the just ; to impugn the true ;
 To blacken every fault thought had but blurred :—
 To vaunt their arms could all the Gods subdue.
 Or chase them out of heaven,—an atheist crew,
 And disbeliefful host,—and their seats give
 To creatural born pretenders, fortune, chance ;
 Developed force, wed atoms with the expanse ;
 To mere material powers that be, not live ;
 All godliest truths ignored ;—such, these who fought—
 So learned I, from the spiritual inview given
 Mine eye,—for falsehood, and, for God, would nought.
 And now, nor time for more served ; for, self-mass'd.
 With treacherous speed, and ranked, their lines as driven
 By inward tempests, on, the foe came fast ;
 From every eye-ball rage and malice gleamed ;
 Like burning floods along the plain they pass'd.
 High on their ensigns strange devices beamed
 Forbidden, of blackest magic scrolled in light
 Of vicious glamour ; spells of murderous might ;
 And weapons weird, with mottoes base bedight,
 Such as around the lips of Circe's bowl,
 Or on siren's tongues suffice to slay the soul ;
 Here, as though stolen from the heraldry of hell,
 On many a shield, 'eternal death,' emblaz'd ;
 Here, the illumined lie, 'no God !' we gazed,
 Imbanner'd. Still no terror us befell.
 But as when earth's forceful orb, ancient of night,
 Rolling serene on her foresmoothed way,
 Some dimly insulant shower of meteor light
 Breasts listless, undeflect ; so our array
 Dense, but with crush of splendours, all their charge
 Hurl'd on us, each receives, contemns at large ;
 So certain seem we of our ultimate day.
 But not too wisely this, nor then. Still on,
 On sweeping still, with shouts and cursings dire,
 Their brows as brass, their squadrons swift as storm
 When arrowy lightnings nature's face deform ;
 Before them darkness, and behind them fire,
 They, hosted, rushed ; and as a sea its banks
 Strikes foaming, thundering, smote our faithful ranks.
 Then closed the armies. Cloud 'gainst cloud when thrown
 By adverse winds, first straggles into thin strife
 From different levels, till, storm-crushed in one,
 Darkness 'mid darkness wedged, with horrors rife,
 The gloomy concave no distinction shows ;

So blended in one vast intricate fray,
 These, bellowing, called destruction on their foes,
 And with a terrible onset nought could stay,
 Left havoc scarcely room his arm to play.
 From our own hearts unspoken prayers arose ;
 And praise of God who the beginnings knows
 Of all things from the end ; and to defeat
 Ever subjects, at first, the cause he hath chose.
 Reeled earth beneath the madness of the shock ;
 The mountains smoked ; the hills broke from their seat ;
 Their banks streams leaped ; groans burst from hardest rock
 The seas convulsed against their barriers beat ;
 The sun, like one who, fear-struck, drops his hands
 Withdraws his beams, and all astonished stands,
 Rayless ; re-waked, lifts her red torch the moon,
 Lest all should yet be lost in total night.
 The trembling stars, unchecked by fervid noon,
 Rush from their bowers, with censers burning bright ;
 Even hell was moved, and weltering where he lay,
 A howl of joy sent forth commingled with dismay.
 Scarce was a pause bethought of, either side,
 And fiercelier e'er the war waxed, for betide
 What might of conflict or conquest, ere long
 The sun ; all saw, must set ;—incentive strong
 With us to fight so as to win, who light
 Even as God's shadow love ; to them, too, night
 Who worship as the friend of fraud. Now, 'mong
 The traitor ranks whose leaders we had guessed
 Nowise, nor knew what griefs their manifest
 Of war set forth,—a chief had late appeared,
 Of towering stature, and of visage fell,
 Who in his hand a dreadful weapon reared
 Macelike, entwined with serpents, seed of hell ;
 While round his neck a burnished shield, its blaze
 Far o'er the war-field flashed with blinding rays.
 Quailed all the faithful 'neath the impending might
 Of this impersonate awe ; a withering spell
 Bode in his eyes that struck with deathly blight
 Men's souls ; scarce 'scaping one, a fatal daze
 Who on those wide-scanning orbs but paused to gaze.
 As when, through sheaf-piled fields, a ball of fire,
 Elanced from cloud electric, speeds its way,
 Scorching and wasting with unwavering ire,
 Each feeble obstacle nought but surer prey ;
 So, through ranks prostrated, the eye might trace
 His devastations by a trenched tract
 Of souls slain seemingly ; and still his pace,
 Precipitate as a lava cataract,
 Death-fraught, he urged ; now, as he nearlier drew
 Amazed, I gazed ; for well that form I knew ;
 And, hailing, would have stayed ; in vain ; for aye
 The desolation round him graves grew.

His step, his mien alas ! I could but know,
 His ominous air ; and from his eye's deep glow,
 Pulsant, requickenings like to ember fanned
 By the owlet's wing, all sequent things in hand
 My soul conceives, undeeded, done, foreplanned.
 " Hold, spirit ; " I cried ; " grant all thy doomed array
 One moment's truce, and these just proffers weigh.
 God willeth not the death ye seek this day ;
 But that ye live. Submit yourselves to heaven,
 Quit evil, and all sin's false pretence eschew ;
 Repent, believe, be good and be forgiven.
 'Tis God's will." " Art thou," quoth the fiend, " the man
 I stood by, late ? " " I am," I said. " And can
 These souls, think'st thou, who live beyond the grave,
 Freed from death's law, who now destruction brave,
 To other will subject them than their own ?
 Speak, all ye hosts ! " " We serve ourselves alone " ;
 Broke in low thunders from those lurid lines,
 Shadowy. " Accept thy answer, nor again
 Obstruct," the demon said, " with projects vain,
 Our course."—Grieved, scarce surprised, retain
 All ours, perseverant, one sublime consent,
 One fixed resolve ; through all our columns shines
 On every face the firm but sweet intent
 To prove, by love's resistless argument
 God kind as just ; and how sin's worst endeavour
 Being finite, must at last fail all to outbrave
 His boundless goodness which, perforce, for ever
 Endures ; not he more prone to love than save
 The souls he hath made. This too we let them hear
 By herald's lips ; and vowed to persevere
 While life remained. Like hardly obstinate, they,
 Motive and end impugned, word sent to say
 No God they knew ; nor, if they won their way
 O'er us, should we great nature's mysteries
 Traduce, and live. Forewarned by taunts like these
 We nerve ourselves once more to war, and strain
 Our strength to o'erthrow the mountainous juggleries
 They forge against us. Strange and monstrous show
 Of all imaginary ills, portents,
 Such only as inventive madness knows,
 Forbye their own, of hideous armaments
 O'erhead in air ; seemed even to join the fray
 The elements bodily ; and whilst fieriest rain
 And winds sulphureous storms contrariant threw
 'Gainst our firm-footed forces, earth and main
 By turns retaliating dismay, now drew
 Hither, the fight, now thither. Fixed retain
 Both hosts the intent, as yet, the day to gain.
 As when some ocean-flood to circumvent
 An island obstacle, its strife-ful tides,

Though to collide at last doomed, first, divides,
This polewards, linewards that, while each intent
On its own course, half with its rival's blent,
Conscious not yet of check, nor rise nor fall
Brooks, till at last, one turbulent level all
In vast libration holds ;—so we this war
And strenuous æquipoise of discontent
Wage, doubt-crowned, nor, who victors know thus far.
We most had suffered ; ours, most wounded, showed.
Yet still meseemed we had gained the ground where stood
Their streamy standards first ; and gained for good.
But as when athwart some broad far-stretching beach
The seaward wind ascendant, hour by hour,
With huge and inexhaustible greed of death,
Sweep sand-clouds suicidal, mad to reach
The invasive waves white plumed who at every breath
A land born levy engulph, insatiate ;—so
Like endless, fruitless like, this strife of power
With power, to feud eternal threats to grow ;
As though even fate prevaricated. Again
From point to point the rebel chieftains flew,
And, passing, on us faithful, looks oft throw
Of proud contempt, to mark the swathes of slain ;
So seemed our vanquished to their treacherous view.
In splendid mien and lofty port they shone,
Dazzling the eye ; and as from out the mass,
They sudden broke, and then were lost anon,
Like stars they showed, when tempests break and pass
In quivering fragments of dark clouds away,
Casting around a brief but baleful ray.
The faithful checked, a moment, now resumed
Hotlier the fight ; and though the rebel arms
Bright bannered, far and wide, the field illumed,
In guise triumphant, brooked no base alarms.
No foot now flinched ; no hand now failed ; no heart
Grew faint, of those who filled, still firm, our throng.
Of sacred ranks ; each soul, inspired, his part
Heaven-named, performed, in zeal and reason strong
For reason strengthened every hand that fought
That day for faith. How tense the strain was ours
One moment proved ecstatic, when, faith-brought ;
Truth, virtue, 'like their cause, their ends, their powers,
Our camp seek ; stay ; and midst our vaunt-guard bide ;
In panoply of proof, with hosts allied,
Givers of victory ; choosers they of all
Whose choice is life eternal ; by our ranks
Hailed rapturously, and their pure aid with thanks ;
Maids of immortal sanctity, we forestall
Their triumph ; and regard half-deified ;—
Invincible, they at least. By our content,
So audibly voiced, the foe at last alarmed,
And at such access of high powers, so armed,

To madness wrought, and upon nought less bent
 Than us to at once annihilate, formed behind
 Each wing, fresh myriads massed ; and passion-blind
 Our lines unmoved assail ; till, flagging they,
 We, our main strength reserved, renew the affray ;
 Impatient, dreadless, on the enemy rush,
 And 'neath our might, in turn, their legions crush.
 As when 'neath spring's bright sun, clouds broken fly
 Before the impulsive wind, and, through the sky
 Routed, as by rejoicing gusts of light,
 Pass, shamed and dulled, so these their fated flight,
 Beneath our swift assaults, speed sullenly.
 Exultant we pursue our conquests ; yield
 They seem to do on all sides ; everywhere
 We spread our terror ; overrun the field ;
 Surrender some ; some clamour to be led
 'Gainst their late friends ;—too weary we, instead,
 These guard for later discipline ;—but the snare
 We are in, mark not ; for, as a rock-foiled wave,
 Instinct with treachery, scoops an envious grave
 For the pursuing surge ; so us, our foe
 Had into straits enticed we could not know
 Aforewhile. Sudden spread around our feet
 Quicksands, where hollower hills redoubled cheat
 With hope of fugitive rest. And some, no few,
 By deffest witchery dazed and drawn, pursue
 A high-road broad, which brings their camp in view,
 Rich in all luxuries, tent and provant there,
 Tempting repose, refreshment. "O beware !"
 Our angel cried, o'er watchful in the sky,
 "'Tis all illusion, 'tis a visible lie.
 Retract, reframe yourselves." Ashamed in time,
 They 'scape the torments of remembered crime,
 And seek circuitously their peers and friends ;
 When lo ! their backs scarce turned, the enchantment ends
 As suddenly. But the enemy boastful now
 Of least success, thought even to countervail
 Our vantage late, by aids that could not fail,
 Suborned of all the powers unjust below ;
 Sin, superstition, passion, vice, hate, pain ;
 He called, and hell's delusions thronged the inane :
 Phantoms and fiendish spectres, such as glow
 Preposterous, on the horizon long and low,
 Where lies, cloud-stifled, on his golden bed
 The tyrant sun ; shapes, that from foot to head,
 Distort themselves fanatically, and change
 Their misconceived proportions every breath
 They draw, ere throes of self-dissolving death
 Scatter o'er space their writhing limbs. So strange
 And to distract our spirits, these shapes appear,
 Foul, threatening, that on high assailed by fear,
 Below by force, we might less mightily ply

Our arms, this wise enfeebled ;—arm nor eye
Quailed, or to phalanxed host, or imminent sky
Not impious force, not ghastliest wizardry,
Prevailed. The tempest of enchantment passed,
Calm, we resumed our freer, safer ground ;
Defend, and for reward brief respite found.
“ Hear, fellow-warriors,” soon I cried, “ not long
Behoves us to recruit our strength with rest.
’Tis action, and its sole end, fair conquest,
Heaven of our arms demands ; ’twere like them wrong,
To stand not ever and instantly on guard.”
Assent all eagerly. Thus, not unprepared
The enemy find us ; but still bent to wage
What war they might, who fought because we spared,
In mean, sparse, unsustained attacks they cast
Their failing strategy ’gainst us ; till, at last,
Not daring longer openly to engage
Our conquering standards, they for parle applied ;
But parley served not ; for we, loyal, pressed
Now keenly on, and all their wiles defied ;
More traitorous than we knew them yet untried.
As vulture trapped our enemy found too late,
Strife nor submission freed from fore-fixed fate,
Of them unthought ; of us, yet unconfessed.
Anon, our faithful pause ; for now the foe
Desperate, turned ’gainst each other, nor expressed
One plan, but for their Head hate sole possessed ;
Whose errors grossest ignorance seemed to show
And whose misfeats all ills to premonstrate ;—
Less seriously concerned our force to wreck
They, than their own league ;—crazed ! More potent check,
No more sufficing punishment could know,
’Twas plain, the adversary. Blow now ’gainst blow
Answering no more from ours, war lulled. While thus
In separate commonalties resolved, and while
By open conflict or by scarce hidden guile,
Each thwarting other, gradually they wound
Their battle from off this world-contested ground,
As though some likelier schemes to rediscuss.
Their leader, prompt to prove his weight in war,
To every foe, or open or envious,
In face of all his gleamy squadrons round,
Stood, as in summer’s dawn the morning star
Is wont, in the young orient to protect
Night’s astral troops, retreating nigh and far
Into heaven’s fastnesses, ere o’ermastering light
All rout ; and seems, while any shadows are,
With his sole tutelar spear, day’s whole effect
To outworth ; such craft of bravery in sight
Of our chafed legions, haughtily dared deploy
Their chief, who would our hopes, God’s ends, destroy.
Yet seize we not the moment to embroil

Our arms afresh ; but pause from battailous toil.
 For now day dimmed, though long seemed dark delayed ;
 And hills, themselves but shadowy, shadows made.
 Now, set the sun ; but who of all forecast
 That sunset he beheld was nature's last ?
 Man's little day, foreweighted on the beam
 Of God's eternal poise, time's day supreme,
 Closed now for aye on that ætherial field ;
 And all to night primæval looked to yield ;
 That strife of strengths supernal, once of old,
 Time's twilight, and the god-war, seer foretold ;
 That contest so to conquest near, as deemed,
 Our hosts, thus ended, worse than doubtful seemed,
 In pardonable distrust ; and some forebode,
 The world's passed, they should see no day of God :
 Not reckoning how all being our God can bend
 To his vast aim, nor whither all things tend.
 Now 'mongst the opposing powers strange factions showed,
 And 'gainst their chief in mutinous hatred glowed.
 Plot plot supplanted : each malign device
 This one a feint proposing, that, a snare,
 Foiled by his craft they sought to sacrifice ;
 He, pondering all, all deems unworth his care.
 Till, galled at bruited failure of his plans,
 The cause of good to ruin, God's and man's,
 As boasted of in hell, and hatched first there,
 Swells ultimately within the demon's breast
 Lust for one more, one crucial, last contest.
 His scheme imparted, animates the rest.
 'Tis fixed ; the friendly powers of darkness aid
 Their columns thickening 'neath night's fraudulent shade.
 Yet not such secret guile was theirs to vaunt,
 But Virtue,—who an eminence hard by
 Had conquered, when she might unseen descry
 All hostile evildom,—she, aye vigilant,
 Forewarned us ; nay, presentient, had divined
 From ominous silence what dumb fiend stood nigh ;
 And thence what proximate peril to first defy.
 As therefore, when, times passed, to obey man's mind,
 The electric harpstrings humming in the wind,
 With latent lightning charged, strange news of birth
 Imperial, peace, war, or loved patriot's death,
 In viewless miracle flashed o'er half the earth,
 By land, by sea, while one could hold his breath,
 So through our serried squares the tidings passed,
 Presignalled by the rise of time-fixed star,—
 From the pure power—' The foe prepares a last
 Assault. Be equal all, anear, afar ;
 Nor doubt the event, God's champions as ye are.'
 And soon, in full extent of all their host,
 On us they advance, wide-horned ; as rock-bound coast,
 Curved crescent-wise, shuts in some helpless bay ;

Though cheered by wavelets bright which know nathless
A spell to check their enemies' forwardness ;—
So we the impending foe abide, and pray.
With a shock they burst upon us, as a cloud,
Rampant in air, hail-fraught, no mean that knows
'Tween the still step of its aerial snows
From this to that horizon, and the breach
Of all heaven's laws by abruptest thunder-speech
In burning bolts articulated, they blast
Our ranks, not foreadvised for nought. Allowed
Scarce time our files again to form, such blows
Dealt they, as might to all subjection teach,
Save their born masters. We, our foes irate,
Instinctive foes, by birth these, those by fate,
By reason more, but all as foes self-classed,
Fight leniently ; nor strive to exterminate,
So much as to chastise and teach. Vain care !
Roused by one wide tempestuous thunder-blast,
Wild brief of all the discordry of war,
They bore down on us, with the sickening sweep
Of an eclipse's wing, which, shadowy, chilled
To its fiery heart, the sphere, and the storm stilled
Of foregone strife ; down on us, in the deep
The murk, unmorrowing, darkness, as it seemed ;
Cleared all mid-spatial checks ; closed for the fray ;
Singled every soul his man, as who should say
Each spirit hath sworn its separate sheaf to reap
From that stupendous tilth, fate's harvest field,
Where all the vanquished, to perdition sealed,
Sank down, to horrible ruin unrepealed
Unmatched ; or so they opined. Not one but dreamed
Of worsting us by truculent rage, or sheer
O'erbearingness ; nor knew their doom how near.
Through all their vast platoons, as lightning ploughs
Black storm-clouds, pierce we ; all our forces rouse ;
In flying raids their wings clip, and attack,
Lighter, their masses dense and dazed ; drive back
To where their main reserves, not yet too late
For one grand stroke, in ignorance stand of fate.
We pause. They form ; charge ; but not all the weight
Their force disorderly could accumulate,
Nor vehement fury gave them, our array
Indented permanently. At this, abashed,
As one who by sheer selfwill hath lost his way,
Our rebels round them glared with dumb dismay,
Like to a storm whose last faint lightnings flashed
Soundless, ere yet it ceased, 'mid heaven's blithe vault
In impotent vapourings. We, meanwhile, who rest,
With one sole resolute purpose prepossessed,
Such thankful tears shed, each on other's breast,
As one life hazarding 'gainst some grim assault
Of the elements, and still extant, sternly glad

Despite the escape from judgment lately had,
 To know his vital virtue not at fault,
 Nor all his lifelong training at last vain,
 Who feels that not to have lost is all to gain ;
 Now, like elate, from rank to rank we tossed,—
 As waves the columned shadow of the sun,
 From this to that spray-crested, ever lost
 In rearward depths, fresh framed in front,—the smile
 Self-luminous of success, so dearly won,
 So scarcely, that disdainful of all wile,
 All force, presumptuous, I at length began
 To accredit fate with faith's too facile plan,
 And dream all might to one sole duel bend
 This battlefield of good and evil man.
 How act ? ' Stand forth, fell foe ; man's, God's,' I cried,
 ' Who dost to both all ill, dost more intend.
 Thy præpotence dread not I ; but fortified,
 Built up and towered in spirit by strength divine,
 I wait to seal this woe, thine end or mine,
 With mine all these ! ' As glides a cloud from far,
 Lone scout of tempests, towards some paly star,
 Pale, not appalled, in silence one may feel
 Perfusive even to fainting, ere it rend
 Its heart in fiery thunders, so reveal
 Our foe storm-massed 'gainst us, their mighty head,
 Towards me advancing on slow foot ;—but ere
 That occultation, crowds on either hand
 Between us rush, and each to his command
 Deliberately returned, reform instead
 Their front, their lines redress. In dudgeon thus,
 He taking ill foregone to advantage us,
 Wheeled round, and suddenly as meteor stone
 From clashing clouds struck, darts he forth alone ;
 A step by each force deemed 'like perilous ;
 So dire the tactic seemed, his aidant powers
 To follow fail ; as shrink to front him ours,
 From awed amaze. As when some dread cyclone,
 Bred high earth's morning land, sweeps forth to sea,
 Southerning, nor until satiate with its plan
 Of mighty annoy turns, raging, norwardly ;
 Slayer of all force save its own ; hut, hull,
 And light-tower, late of life and radiance full,
 Stilled ; woods all levelled ; every animate breath
 For ever quenched ; beneath its storm-stretched wing
 One scapeless, boundless doom on all beneath
 Spread silent ; spared no single senseful thing
 On main or mold ; but, ruinous most of man,
 Ends, where of death still prodigal, it began ;
 So evil, he, insuperable, his race
 Typhonic rounds to his first sad starting place,
 Like orbitally ; we dumb ; those burning most
 For battle, as these, a seeming dead-struck host ;

But seeming only ; by self dread subdued ;
 By dread of hell ; of heaven ; to these renewed
 Came soon more wholesome life. Fell now from heaven,
 As I the event sought of this strife in prayer,
 These words, space-sundering ; ' To nought made is given
 This war to end, but to God sole. Persevere
 Ye righteous souls. Ye win, if late, win ever.'
 Heart warm with joy I heard. To us who know
 We no defection have to mourn, to show,—
 With growth of disciplined forces everywhere,
 No breast but glows recuperative, no arm
 But touched one moment by the sacred charm
 Of that soul-medicine, he, within his tent
 The great Physician, gives to all who will ;
 To us, of strength vouchsafed proud, ardent, still,
 As warriors of the light to fight 'gainst ill,
 Scarce other plan than this seemed left, untried,
 God's mind, diffused abroad in us, our guide,
 The enemy now to charge in chief ; and while
 Their force by ours outmastering, force and guile
 Alike crushed, bind, in love's constraining bands ;
 For in our camp was store of griefless chains
 Unloosenable, which nought, not pride withstands,
 Of golden patience wrought and purest pains,—
 Nor slay, but relegate solely to God's hands.
 This vow by each partook, and ministered
 Mutually, as though by comforting wine and bread,
 Refreshed, each heaven-devote battalion stands ;
 One moment pray we silently ; then form ;
 Then forward, by one impulse, like a storm.
 But oh ! a storm of tenderness and fear
 For them, not of them, even as streams o'erbear,
 But not uproot, the sedgy crop they hold ;
 Thus irresistibly we outswEEP, enfold,
 Thus, peace-inspired, we war ; pass hope ; each hand
 Mightier than aught known evil might gainstand,
 Evil, cloud-lifed. Boots not to tell how last
 O'erthrown, cowed, conquered, 'neath our yoke they passed,
 Nor how, heaven therefor thanked, we testified
 Our boundless joy. But as the earth-conquering tide,—
 Who many a green and purple braid, at large,
 Twist gorgeously in trebly tinted strand,
 Like desert sanctuary's symbolic band,
 Casts careless on the shore's wide shining marge ;
 With giant globelets gemmed of rainbow foam,
 Seed of the sea, whence beauty first was born ;—
 A mass ingarlanded of jewelled weeds ;
 His prostrate foe thus decked in divine scorn
 Of strength, strength sterner had o'erborne ;—so we
 All honours quartering with the enemy,
 Nor longer counting possible strife to come,
 Our vanquished load with spoil of generous deeds ;

Drive, jubilant, all our glittering triumph home,
 With song, and loud conclaim of victory.
 Thus warred, thus win we. Time shall sink in night
 But never shall from memory pass the sight
 Transcendant, when the foe their sign first gave
 Of full submission. Like the smile of light,
 The silent lightning of the moonlipped wave,
 Which, lengthening gradual, parts now, now extends ;
 Beams from far points at once, there central breaks ;
 Here from the midst its flight extremeward takes ;
 Then, sudden ceased, revives ; revives, nor ever ends ;—
 Gleamed forth the inexhaustible joy, now ours
 Through all our dazzling lines. There are, meanwhile,
 With our changed adversaries, no longer powers
 Of ill, who fain with fate would reconcile
 Their late discomfited chief. He, too, in mien
 By sudden sorcery changed, both hosts between,
 On wing malefic hung, as, poised o'er sands,
 Shadowy, a black and jagged cloud will lie,
 Monstrous and solitary. Too fierce to fly
 But, braving doom, with uplift impious hands
 Clenched, clubbed with threats, he glowered upon the sky,
 The great infortune of the universe ;
 All winding, man and God, in one unuttered curse.
 "O thou All-good !" I cried, "to yon dark power,
 Malevolent, in the air, betwixt thy throne
 And us, our cause arraigning in thine own,
 Be thy miraculous might, conversive, shown,
 And all thy mercy usward, this dread hour ;
 Or show us how our foe to annihilate."
 Presumptuous, thus, impatient, if I prayed
 Yet not unacceptably all, as fate
 To the world reveals. For lo ! all life create,
 As warrior's breast of arrowy bolt relieved
 Flesh racking,—groaned with joy, as down he fell,—
 God's passive hand withdrawn, without whose aid
 Things nathless evil, were all of force bereaved,—
 With thunderous shock, reverberant even in hell,
 The spirit, disrealmed, of ill ; there stirless laid.
 All being seemed now aswound, and smitten as dumb.
 Grew a presage in every breast of some
 Solemn and saintly act of God to come.
 As when, at eve, some cloud, which long hath lain
 The oppression of the heavens, and of a realm
 The terror,—fled,—redeemed from nameless fear,
 Anarchal, of earth-quakings, and the train
 Of ills conflagrantly, which by larcenous wile
 By chance, by lightning, oft whole states o'erwhelm ;—
 Make glad the citizens, seeing, slow, appear
 In air, a pearly calm, as though of sphere
 Happier than theirs ; the young moon's maiden smile
 Lands, sullen late, lights up ; the tranquil main

Rests to its roots ;—so we, war gone, heaven's peace,
 Coheir of bliss, and all their vast release,
 Welcome. The day of God, to us the day
 Of joy, to theirs destined of dire dismay,
 Dawned o'er our heads ; the sun of justice, sphere
 Of righteousness, no setting more to fear,
 Beamed manwards ; and his seat assumed for aye.
 All now the end of ends knew nigh ; and lo !
 Each eye intent on heaven's aspect, there shone
 Instant, on light's enlarging horizon,
 As crystallized by the spirit which round us blew
 Perfect, in symmetry divine to view
 A long slim cloudlet, like to a golden bow
 Knapped just i' the midst ; its loose and listless chord
 Tangled about it. Thus showed God the Lord
 That fight was finished ; good's great victory won ;
 Earth's war of spiritual light and darkness done ;
 The strife of ages closed. Then all the sun
 Helped us to note our foemen's piteous state,
 And know thereby our victory half achieved
 Onely, while charity failed to renovate
 With hope those fallen ; with faith those sin-deceived ;
 With trust in God those erst who misbelieved.
 These humbled now, submissive, silent, gave
 Ruth first its power to amend, grace, hope to save ;
 Us, spirit to help that ardent multitude
 'Gainst ours so lately arrayed, but whom we viewed
 Now, burying out of sight, in one deep grave,
 Their carnal arms, ashamed. Disharnessed, nude
 They watched their banners burn. Then first we saw,
 Glancing on our own arms, each arm a law
 Of God, each weapon a virtue ; shield and glaive
 A truth divine, strong to subdue or save ;
 Wrought of God's hand, God's art ! without a flaw ;
 Forged in heaven's fire ; impenetrable, alike,
 This, faith to guard ; by reason, that, to strike.
 While myriads thus their arms laid down, subdued
 By kindness, patience, grace, love, mansuetude ;
 All human excellences and God's combined ;
 And while truth, wisdom, virtue all things viewed
 Approvingly, and helped one mighty mind
 From all to mould, some few start out, of kind
 Indomitable, and for meet punishment,
 Conform to holy reason's just intent,
 And his, divine, reserved,—who from the age
 Initial of the world, life's every stage
 Hath loved to advance and sought to ameliorate.
 We, these things knowing, and with the great effect
 Secured, well pleased, thanks first to God direct ;—
 Which done, in every wound we pour the balm
 Of heavenly all-heal ; every conscience calm
 With mercy's anodyne ; strengthen every mind

With just belief of strife man's vital need
 By one all wise, who good and ill so twined
 With freedom, that his fate man rules,—decreed
 Until to nature's war heaven's peace succeed ;
 And God's pure truth triumphant prove the intent
 He, world-wise providence, from the first hath planned,
 That good 'gainst ill, in free arbitrement
 Of spirit, fair fought, should final conqueror stand ;
 Reason, faith serving, sin and self command ;
 And bale and bliss, life's vast contrariant whole,
 One cause confess, one universal soul.
 Now all earth's old distinctions ceased ; sea, land
 Lapsing into their primal essence grew
 Ætherial, and the wind, world-warning, threw—
 As wretched seer who some state-ruinous ill
 Foretelling, helps his woeful weird fulfil,
 The popular mind distraught by such sad skill,—
 Into each dying gust, as breathed of fate,
 Force, our mixed tribes once more to segregate ;
 Soul winnowing far from soul. These banned,—the word
 Compellant, sternly mild, in fatherly tone
 Said, as by one who willed to amend their state,
 Nor utterly ruined nor all reprobate,
 Who favoured error, sin, the imperfect,—heard
 Wistful : not ignorant how to reatone
 With God the spirit, and knowing so concurred
 In their just doom ; knew, all the long career
 Of pains abstersive, pains heaven's nether sphere
 Ope aye to all, ere filled the soul's great year
 Before them ; knew their kind remedial end
 Necessitated ; and went. As one by one
 Like rags of darkness from night's mantle riven,
 Eve's tempest slackened, clouds, the face of heaven
 Long shadowingly deform, loath to be gone ;
 But all at last mass up the horizon,
 So they : their chief in bonds, once seeming friend,
 Prey of my falchion, spoil now of this spear,
 Out-taken ; he, still reserved for judgment here :—
 God's will so said. Meanwhile we, warned, attend
 A further sign ; and instantly 'twas given ;
 A fire-voice ; gathering gradual out of heaven,
 Sense hallowing, mind transfiguring, round us came ;
 A voice ; as when within some holy shrine
 Our God comes down in answer to his name
 Invoked, and with a wordlessness divine
 Holds converse inmost ; and us, who had striven
 Through this soul conflict, calling, straight we know,—
 As lived things dead, touched, erst, by prophet's rod,
 In us the spirit regenant's deathless glow ;
 A fire, that all with purifying zest
 Before it, burned ; consuming, midst our breast
 Nature's whole evil ; and this fire was God.

I, then :—" As reeflet, long from parent shore
 Orphaned, that save at hollowest ebb of all
 Year-tides, peers not the savage surges o'er,
 Nor airs her pearl and coral, childish store,
 I' the golden light ; nor ever,—while befall
 Others, such less joys oft,—rejoins, by chance
 Her kindred lands ; gift compensative none
 Desiring for life-long suppression more
 Than this, eternized to her,—the sun's glance ;
 So, from time's deeps emergent, and the flood
 Refluous, of life and death, my soul, in thine,
 O God ! sole spirit of universal good,
 Oned with all blessed, the unnumbered multitude ;
 Immortal, mystic, militant, and divine,
 Would in thine eye-light bask, thy governance."
 No after sound nor sign. The renovate sphere
 Good thus world victor, evil o'erthrown,—us, here
 Biding God's ends, see, angels ! Dost not fear
 Fiend ! late my foe, fate's future, deadlier pass ?

LUCIFER. Have not I triumphed o'er the world that win,

GOD. Prince of the powers of air, thy doom is nigh.
 The prison and place of spirits shall be for thee
 As for all these guilt 'complices thine, thou hast wronged
 For a time one proper mansion : they in pain
 Emendative : thou, evil !

LUCIFER. And what if I
 Heart-hardened, still endure ? While lasts the world,
 Thou mayst restrain, confine ; not make to cease.

GOD. Him lead ye angels into Hades, there
 To await my will while the world's sabbath lasts.
 These souls elect, self purified, fore-called
 Who die not, nor, who through my favour, lose
 Unconscious, by death's intermediate sleep,
 Nor expiative amercement, joy in me,
 Who, righteous souls of all earth's epochs passed,
 All faiths, all grades of mind, here from the tomb
 First-born, the truth, in heaven once gospelled, prove ;
 That faith should conquer misbelief, the good
 All ill subject, virtue all sin ; and these
 Led by one sampling soul, forechosen of love,
 First fruits of life celestial which their breast
 Fills,—shall the earth, now renovated, indwell.

ANGELS. Be it Lord as thou dost will, with us, with all

GOD. Angel of earth, and thou bright Phanuel, sole
 In the infinite presence, visible of thyself,
 And you, ye astral souls, who, latewhile, here,
 Earth's end, as rise, saw, and this unfixed mean
 Of seeming chaos ; who still animate, guide,
 Or train the orblets to your genial care
 Consigned, and in your charge as in my love
 Happy, know, all, if, sumless times now gone
 Earth's mountainous frame to upbuild, from central base,

To airiest battlement once I willed, 'twas not
 Necessity clogged my hands, nor forced compute
 Of infinite atomies ; no, my power as choice
 Untrammelled, see, angel of starry earth,
 My special promise once in heaven's records
 Enrolled, shall be fulfilled. While time beholds
 Orbs vaster, scattered into particles, dim
 The surface of eternity's flood, conjoin
 The casual meteor, or for ages drift
 Through space extenuate, to minutest motes
 Dissolved, even lucent dust, and radiant mist,
 Prime manifest of the invisible essence, thine,
 Regathering all its elements shall again
 Brighten the vital air, fierily refined.
 Lo ! earth shall live again and, with her sons,
 Have resurrection to a brighter being ;
 And wakening like a bride, or like a morning,
 With a long blush of love, to a new life,
 Another race of souls shall rule in her,
 Creatures all loving, beautiful and holy ;
 Such,—see them !—as, evil quelled, and justice wrought,
 Have vanquished bound and trampled under foot
 Their souls' defect, by self-set tendence towards
 The absolute good ; whom death holds therefore not
 In more than freshening slumber, and who, prime
 Resurgents of all life, haste now to live.

LUNIEL. Heard'st thou the word ?

ANGEL OF EARTH. The word I heard, Earth, be !
 And earth meseemed in echoing, learned to live.

PHANUEL. So swift the omnific word, scarce syllabled, lo !
 The perfect orb, in shape as erst, but made
 Purer, ætherial, instantly restored,
 As these glad eyes but now behold, to form,
 And purified, by God's sole actful word.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Be glad with me, ye angels ! Earth from
 sleep

Regenerative, awakening, all her powers
 Her beauties, spring spontaneous ; gum and pine
 Entwine their shadows ; lily and violet blend
 Odours ; and myrtle and bay on morning gales
 Eve's perfumes, stored with starry jasmin, musk,
 And rose in amicable exchange, shall strew.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. See paradise her growth of nectarous flowers
 Revives, to crown the eternal season's hours !
 Away, ill ; pain, away ! Creation, burst
 Into one orderly hymn of joy ; all life
 Sing, voluntary, his love, who willed to make
 From evil all good, as all from nothing, first ;
 Henceforth with changeless boons and beauties rife,
 For his own glory, and for his creatures' sake ;
 Of him so loved, all his with rational hope
 Endowed that they might trace in nature's scope

Presage of perfectness all lives should take.
 No fire, no sea ; all elements to one form
 Final, of universal use, and plan,
 Reverting ; air invulnerable of storm ;
 Earth, pure, transpicious, shadowless ; and man
 Apt for commune with God, as he began.

ANGELS. The world begins and ends with paradise,
 The garden and the city of the blessed ;
 Begins with paradise and ends with heaven.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Thee, thank we, Lord ! all powers of spiritual
 light,

Concerned thy counsels to partake, and spread
 Wideliest we may allwhere the holy ends
 Of thy benevolence. Most, earth's warden, I.

GOD. Go, angel ! guide her as erewhile through heaven.

LUNIEL. Sometime my half-gloomed sphere, again may live.

ANGEL OF EARTH. On ! on ! my world again !

Again we fly
 Through heaven's blue plain,
 As thought through the eye ;
 Ye angels keep your heaven.
 I earth. For that with God
 I have striven ;
 And have prevailed,
 I come once more ;
 I come to thee, earth !
 Like a ship to shore.

XLVIII.

Millennial earth, transfigured to a star,
 The rebegotten world, see, born again ;
 Good, universal order, peace and joy.
 Fruits of the new creation, all the heirs
 Holy, of light, share ; sweet command in these,
 In those, obedience sweeter still. All art
 Sublimed, all science hallowed, to best ends,
 Life worldly made life heavenly by God's law
 Pervasive, spiritual ill, pain bodily, cease.
 Are gloriously disproven all godless doubts,
 Earth's caverned prophecies, of oracular reek
 Voiced, not divine breath, of mere fleshlihood.
 Virtues incorporate spiritual-wise, with heaven
 Linked, their original nature show and end.
 Life lower now with more intelligence dowered,
 Docile, unarmful, gladdens in fates humane.

Earth Millennial.

ARCHANGEL, ANGEL OF EARTH, LUNIEL, ANGELS, SAINTS,
 ANGELA, FESTUS, and CLARA.

ANGEL OF EARTH. God and the world one Holy family ;
 The houses of the heavens and earth allied ;

That was the prophecy, and this the proof ;
Love the beginning of the great return.

LUNIEL. I had a happy vision yesternight.
Methought I saw the gathering of all tribes
Of men returning out of dateless death,
Unto the Holy land, the land of life.

SAINTS. We saw it likewise ; we, yea, all of us,
And heard the angels sing : far up mid heaven
Their blessed words resounded, of our thoughts
The pure celestial echoes ; this their hymn.

They come from the ends of the earth,
White with its aged snows ;
From the bounding breast of the tropic tide,
Where the day-beam ever glows ;
From the east where first they dwelt,
From the north, and the south, and the west,
Where the sun puts on his robe of light,
And lays down his crown to rest.

Out of every land they come ;
Where the palm triumphant grows,
Where the vine overshadows the roofs and the hills,
And the gold orbéd orange glows :
Where the olive and fig-tree thrive,
And the rich pomegranates red,
Where the citron blooms, and the apple of ill
Bows down its fragrant head.

From the lands where the gems are born ;
Opal and emerald bright ;
From shores where the ruddy corals grow,
And pearls with their mellow light ;
Where silver and gold are dug,
And the diamond rivers roll,
And the marble white as the still moonlight
Is quarried, and jetty coal ;—

They come—with a gladdening shout ;
They come—with a tear of joy ;
Father and daughter, youth and maid,
Mother and blooming boy.
A thousand dwellings they leave,
Dwellings—but not a home ;
To them there is none but the sacred soil,
And the land whereto they come.

They are princes and conquerors all,
With the Father of spirits and men ;
The elect of all ages He knew they might fall,
But resurgent, be with Him again.
Their Maker, their Saviour, their Judge,
They shall know Him the One, as of yore,
And the burden be lift from the heart of the world,
And the veil on their souls be no more.

And the Temple again shall be built,
More holy than ever of old ;
Be the floor the new Earth, and the star-storied sky
Be the roof that all soul shall enfold.

From the saints of all worlds to their Lord,
 Prayer morning and eve shall rise ;
 And the lamb, of all sinlessness sign upon earth,
 They shall follow, His flock, in the skies.

ANGEL OF EARTH. As isles, disjoined by superficial deeps,
 Yet rooted stand in unity with worlds ;
 So with the interior continent of heaven,
 Earth and its own.

SAINTS. Now know we the whole world
 The land of heavenly commerce, where both kinds
 Of men and angels mix with mutual gain ;
 With knowledge, and with wisdom, and with joy
 Flowing ; the final festival of time.

PHANUEL. Angels, God's gracious ministry, doubt ye not,
 In many a sphere,—by laws of light and weight
 With yours commutual bound, as ye to them,
 Spiritual, by sense of right and truth, by proof,
 By love of Deity, and by bonds to both
 Common of virtue and piety, interchange
 With chosen intelligences and spirits of power,
 Thrones and all heavenly excellences, who scale
 The star-stair of perfection's tower, glad news
 Of orbs, even yours, regenerate. Every globe
 A mansion of the spirit, world-blessing souls
 Mingle at large with men. Know, who would prove
 Divinity by deeds works miracles ; who
 By words, speaks mysteries mixed with clearest truths.
 All revelation is a mystery, here.

ANGEL OF EARTH. The ultimate mysteries faith shall celebrate,
 Perfective, of the holy spirit, are God's ;
 Whose manifold salvation all imbounds,
 Sinner and saint, one world completing plan.

SAINTS. O holy Angel, warden of the world,
 Who guidest its first footsteps o'er the path,
 Untried of newest space, well trodden now,
 Which round the sun it circleth ; and thou, too,
 Serenest of all angels, fairest, first,
 Of those here culled, the flower of heaven's bright hosts,
 Who knowest the heart of truth, and well may'st smile
 At legends of the birth of sun and stars,
 The atomic ancestries of elements,
 And infantile antiquity of time,—
 We in this sphere rejoice that with ye we
 The truth possess and glory in. Do thou
 Speak then, who canst, bright angel guide of earth,
 If leisure thine, whose long experience tends
 Far past the immediate parentage of time,
 Into eternal æons, what to us
 The Godblessed words may prove of living light.
 Instruct us in the wisdom of the heavens,
 At once the gate and goal of the true life
 The empyrean shadows, so that we

Like self obedient elements, which contain
 Their total laws and partial liberties,
 The reign of God may honour in all spheres,
 And act therewith concordantly, as here.

ANGEL OF EARTH. As when one wise in Nature's ways of old,
 Gazing through optic lens, heaven's spatial plains,
 Perceived that what to naked eye black blanks
 Unfathomable, and lonesome adits seemed
 From universe to universe, were in truth
 Crowded with suns ; so, too, created mind,
 Scanning the depths of Deity, must confess,
 When by his will enlightened, that what shows
 As mere inexplicable judgment, fate,
 Imposed by arbitrary ruler, first,
 Proves, rightly known of good and glory full,
 As firmamental fields with orbs of life.
 For infinitely various are the ways
 Wherein God conquers evil ; at one time
 Slowly eradicating, line by line,
 Its fatal features, and again, by one
 Annihilative word, destroying it.
 The sphere I mourned as mine, to ruin doomed,
 God hath restored to being ; and newly dowered
 With life, and holy soul, transformed, it beams
 Self-shining. And, recipient of all bliss
 Unmerited, unmeasured, she the like
 Imparts to all who in her hallowed light,
 Gladden. Thereto, I now ; God bidden to tend.

LUNIEL. The issue of all ages is at hand.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Heaven's ways are always cyclical ; its events
 All orbital, its æras ; and albeit
 The sin of man, Promethean, never cease,
 Nor the avenging vulture's beak, blood-wet ;
 Yet is the arrow always on the wing,
 Which seeks the heart of vengeance, seeks and slays.
 So from the first divine forgiveness clasps,
 To her all quickening bosom, all which live ;
 Calls all by name, and naming, halloweth them.

SAINTS. Thus, by God's goodness, goodness comes to us
 Out of his boundless plenitude ; and man,
 The shadowy semblance of the vast divine,
 Like a dark sphere absorbed into the sun,
 As in presecular time emergent thence,
 His constellated seat assumes in heaven,
 A deathless incarnation of the light.
 And this despite of evil, sin, and pain,
 That every faculty be perfected,
 And all affection purified in man ;
 Love being love of good, hate, hate of ill ;
 Divinest hate, unanimous with love.
 Wherefore to those who realize God's will,
 And with the same their own assimilate

Water in water flowing, air in air,
 Passive as silence, active as the light,
 Receiving and dispensing, moments fall
 Like silver raindrops stippled in the ground,
 Whose resurrection is in grain of gold.
 But with the generation of the world,
 Who their back turned upon the sun to toy
 With their own shadows, meanly pleased to mark
 Their selfgrowth, not considering that the more
 These things extend themselves, the nearer they
 To their extinction ;—not thus. Night comes on ;
 And lo ! the whole flock in the fold of death.

ANGEL OF EARTH. Ends and beginnings mingle at the last ;
 All ultimates are foreordained ; these days,
 And those far times, when yon fair flowering orb,
 Lily-like, beamed out of time's shadowy tide ;
 And spread its bright and continental leaves,
 Fragrant with sunny incense, to the heavens.
 But his infallible eye, beneath whose beam
 Essence becomes appearance, every day
 Doomsday, an inner circlet of pure time,
 Concentric with eternity, and part
 Of the same all inclusive octave here,
 The darkness from the light shall sejugate ;
 The visible veil of the invisible.
 And the times near when all shall be complete ;
 The golden seed from ripe fulfilment fall ;
 Eternal mind immortal utterance make ;
 The many-coloured arch a circle be ;
 Earth's orb elect her crescent horns conjoin
 With light perpetual, total, vital light ;
 And, the mixed past made pure and holy, cause
 The present paradise, the future heaven.

SAINTS. Man's being is an everlasting birth ;
 We are ourselves the elements of heaven.
 And as the eye is sacred to the sun,
 So be the soul to God. It is sweet to point
 To prophecies fulfilled, when spells of good.
 To us extinct all ill, all sin, all woe ;
 The world seems wreathed from end to end with joy,
 And garlanded with glory, as the hall
 Of some great populous palace at a feast.
 Our nature we relume, too, as the sun,
 From the bright burning atmosphere he breathes,
 The starry spirits of his frame renews,
 And revels in his glory without end.
 So we in that divinity rejoice,
 Wherein all spiritual essence is and acts,
 Authentic because free.

ANGELS. Praise therefore heaven.

SAINTS. To thee, God, maker, ruler, saviour, judge !
 The Infinite, the Universal One,

Whose righteousnesses are as numberless
 As creature sins ; who giver art of life ;
 Who sawest from the first that all was good,
 Which thou didst make, and sealed'st it with thy love,
 Thy boundless benediction on the world ;
 To thee be honour, glory, prayer and praise,
 And full-orbed worship from all worlds, all heavens.
 May every being bless thee in return
 As thou dost bless it ; every age and orb
 Utter to thee the praise thou dost inspire.
 Let man, Lord ! praise thee most, as all redeemed,
 As many in the saints, as one in thee.
 Oh may perpetual pleasure, peace, and joy,
 And spiritual light inform all souls ;
 And grace and mercy in bliss thousandfold
 Enwrap the world of life. May all who dwell
 On open earth, or in the hid abyss,
 Howe'er they sin or suffer, in the end,
 Receive, as beings born at first of thee,
 The mercy that is mightier than all ill.
 May all souls love each other in all worlds,
 And all conditions of existence : even
 As now these lower lives that dwell with man
 In amity, rejoicing in the care
 Of their superior, and in useful peace,
 Upon the common earth, no more distained
 With mutual slaughter—no more doomed to groan
 At sight of woe, and cruelty, and crime.
 Lo ! all things now rejoicing in the life
 Thou art to each and givest, live to thee ;
 And knowing other's nature and their own
 Live in serene delight, content with good,
 Yet earnest for the last and best degree.
 Their hands are full of kindness, and their tongues
 Are full of blessings, and their hearts of good.
 All things are happy here. May kindness, truth,
 Wisdom, and knowledge, liberty and power,
 Virtue and holiness, o'erspread all orbs
 As this star now ; the world be bliss and love ;
 And heaven alone be all things ; till at last
 The music from all souls redeemed shall rise,
 Like a perpetual fountain of pure sound,
 Upspringing, sparkling in the silvery blue ;
 From round creation to thy feet, O God !

FESTUS. One's fellow conquerors recognized in peace,
 How calm, how sweet this life ! from passion pure,
 From natural evils freed. The storm of time
 The world hath wept through, and the whirl of life
 Once mine, shows like an agonized dream
 Hung in the halls of memory, bannerwise ;
 Proof-sign of victory passed. Speak, angel-bride,
 Being of bliss and beauty, seems not this

The peace serene thy spirit longed for once?

CLARA. It is. How doubly dear all sacred things
Show to the soul elect salvation here
Hath hallowed; and how blessed the high employ,
God's wisdom teaching to millennial man,
And learning love divine.

FESTUS. Doubt's tempest-age
Soothed into silent and profound belief;
The soul's ambitious and ill-ordered quests
Chastened to aspirations; all desires,
Calm as the regular breathings of the breast.
What joy to worship, in our heart recrowned,
The exiled sovereign of earth's youth, long lost,
Our old paternal faith!—What joy to feel,
Though life-deforming passions come and go,
Stormlike, and cloudlike, high o'er all, the spirit
Stands, in impassive purity and peace,
Identical with heaven. See, soul of light,
Thy kindred angel!

ANGELA. Yes. This joy is mine,
To quit betimes the grandeurs of the sun,
His continents of light and sea-like springs
Of radiance, here to wander by their side
Beloved on earth as mine; and ye are they
I loved most. Most of all it gladdeneth me
In hallowed commune thus to help expand
The spirit capacious of extremest truth,
With ends beneficent; so that kindly act
Keep pace with godly thought.

FESTUS. God's universe,
A boundless field for ever-active good,
To soul so bent, unfolds. While, world by world—
Through all successive spheres, the aspiring spirit,
Death born, yet reascendent, till it come,
Through many a cradling starlet, to the orb
Whence its predestined rise shall end all proof,
Restore the wanderer to the way, and blend
Life momentary with the eternal state,
The everlasting order of all days,—
Wisdom her many-chambered dome reveals,
Her graduated heaven.

CLARA. Content with this,
One altar in her thousand-shrined fane,
Earth's simpler souls their rites of truth and love
Like faithfully fulfil with those enthroned
Who look down on the empyrean. Here
All knowledge sanctified, all mind enlarged,
All faculties reformed, how perfect seems
To eyes illumed with truth's interior light,
Self-opening, flowerlike, those most gracious trials
Our souls once suffered; sufferings now enjoyed.

ANGELA. What lengths we reach of spiritual light;

What breadths now compass our celestial views;
 What heights faith's visionary eye commands;
 What depths we fathom of divinity;
 Let him tell, who can count the motes of air,
 Stars, and the rays of stars, or God's good deeds.

FESTUS. Alas! what mean conceptions once were man's
 Of God; his essence, nature, ends. In vain
 Men thought to magnify the Infinite,
 Who merely magnified their own small thought,
 And made it monstrous. Not in vain for such
 May we thy pity ask, thy pardon, Lord;
 For us, the joy to feel, the gift to prove
 Love, power, and wisdom omnicausal thine,
 Which from the fount divine of being flow.
 With hatred and revenge are base effects,
 And passions, to mean natures only known;
 Not to be charged to God, nor named with him.
 Passions are proofs of imperfection. Thou
 Only hast all perfections, God! who art
 Eternal reason quickening boundless laws;
 The laws of love, life, light, wherein be based
 The world's sublime foundations.

ANGELA. Oh, how vast
 The glories of the future, once mismatched
 'Gainst earth-life merely, and all its littleness.

CLARA. Were happiness alone our being's aim,
 We, over nature reigning and mere soul,
 Pure intellect, and all whom, led by them
 Our better lot is here to raise, refine,
 Enlighten, free from inner mental bonds,
 Oh, glorious rule! it might indeed seem well
 For good of others and our own delight,
 This natural dispensation and divine,
 This first degree of heaven should aye perdure.

ANGELA. True; earth is all one Eden. Pity 'twere,
 That it should ever end.

SAINT. I say not so;
 Although I have a thousand plans in hand,
 Some interwoven with the farthest stars—
 Each one of which might ask a year of years
 To perfect.

CLARA. Be it; our Maker knoweth best
 What thought or deed may best belong to time,
 Or to eternity.

SAINT. All prophecy
 Hath said the earth shall cease, and that right soon.

FESTUS. It is like enough. Beauty's akin to death.

ANGEL. Behold, our sister graces of the skies,
 Faith, Hope, and Love, descend! Methinks of late
 Ye chiefly dwell on earth.

LOVE. Where lives and reigns
 The divine humanity, there are we ever seen.

Successive, as the seasons to the sun.

SAINTS. Well are ye known and welcome in all worlds,
Wherever lofty thought or godly deed
Is lodged or compassed, there your blessings rest.

HOPE. How sweet, how sacred now, this earth of man's,
The prelude of a yet sublimer bliss!—

I marked it from the first, while yet it lay
Lightless and stirless; ere the forming fire
Was kindled in its bosom, or the land
Lift its volcanic breastwork up from sea.
The deluge and idolatries of men
I viewed, though shuddering, and with faltering eye,
E'en to the incarnation of heaven's Truth,
And dawn of earth's best faith; that faith which fled
An infant, waxed anon a giant; peeped,
A star, and grew a heaven-fulfilling sun;
Which was an outcast, and became, ere long,
A dweller in all palaces; which hid
Its head in dens of deserts, and sat throned,
After, in richest temples high as hills:
Which, poured out painfully in mortal blood,
Rose an immortal spirit; as a slave
Was sold for gold and prostrated to power;—
And now that lowly bondmaid is a queen;
And lo! she is beloved in earth and heaven;
And lieth in the bosom of her Lord,
The bride of the all-worshipped, one with God.

LOVE. We, even of divinest origin,
In infinite progression view all worlds;
And we are happy.

FAITH. The dead sleep as yet;
But their day cometh, and the bonds of death
Already slacken around the living soul;
The mortal sleep of ages, which began
When time sank down into his slumberous west,
Thins even now o'er the reviving eyes,
Gathering their heaven-lent light, no more to wane
In woe or age: never be quenched in tears,
Like a star in the sea. It is as I ever knew;
My life is to receive and to believe
The word and words of God.

LOVE. I who am Love,
And Grace, and Charity, rejoice with you,
Whither ye wend I with ye; whether here,
Or on the utmost rim of Light's broad reign,
The least and last of stars which even seems
To tremble at its insignificance,
In presence of Infinity; where yet
No angel's wing hath waved, nor foot of fiend
Left its hot imprint;—still, in all do we
Find fit delight and honour, as now here.
Now earth and heaven hold commune, day and night;

There's not a wind but bears upon its wing
The messages of God; and not a star
But knows the bliss of earth.

FESTUS. The earth hath God
Remade, and all its elements refined,
Fit for sublimer being. Flesh hath passed
Its fiery baptism, and come forth clear
As crystal gold: all that of vile or mean
Pertained to it hath perished atomless.
The kindred ties of family and race,
Intensified into identity, now,
Earth, like a diamond, basks in her own free light,
Unfed, unaided, unrequiring aught.
All now is purity, and power, and peace.
The first-born of creation, they who hail
Archangels as their brethren, mountainlike
Reign o'er the plains of men, converting all;
Reaping the fields of immortality,
Each one his sheaf, for him the harvest-Lord;
To whom belongs earth's whole estate and life,
And every world's.

PHANUEL. And he shall garner all.
The awful tribes which have in Hades dwelt,
Passed count of time, await their rising. God's
Great day, the sabbath of the world's long week,
Is at high noon; the Judge hath yet to come.

CLARA. The shadows of eternity o'ercast
Already time's bright towers. The heavens shall come
Down like a cloud upon the hill, and sweep
Their spirit over earth, and the whole face
And form of things shall be dissolved and changed.
Nothing shall be but essence, perfect, pure,
And void of every attribute but God's.
This even is too gross for that to come,
The holy have the earth, and heaven is theirs.

FESTUS. Nor pain, nor toil of mind or frame, nor doubt
Nor discontent, nor enmity to God,
Disturb the steady joy the spirit feels;
Nor element can torture, nor time tire;
Nor sea nor mountain make or bar or fear;
Sickness and woe and death are things gone by;
Destroyed with the destruction of the world:—
Shadows of things which have been, never more
To waste the world's bright hours, nor grate the heart
Of mighty man; now fit for thrones and wings;
Ruler of worlds, main minister of heaven,
Inheritor of all the prophecies
Of God, fore-uttered through the tongues of time,
Ages of ages. Evil is no more.

ARCHANGEL. And does earth satisfy thee now?

FESTUS.

As earth.

There is a brighter, loftier life for man

Even yet, the very union with God.

PHANUEL. God works by means. Between the two extremes
Of earth and heaven there lies a mediate state,—
A pause between the lightning lapse of life
And following thunders of eternity ;—
Between eternity and time a lapse,
To soul unconscious, though agelasting, where
Spirit is tempered to its final fate ;
Within or between worlds, repose or bliss
Divested, man shall mix with deity,
And the eternal and immortal make
One being. As in earth's first paradise
God's spirit walked with man, and commune made
With him, so in the second, after death,
Man's spirit walks with God in an elect
Existence, and a vigil of the great,
The holy day which is to break in heaven.
Thither Truth's prophet went, in the dread hour
That hell by earth on heaven revenged itself,
With one soul penitent 'compained ;—nor long
Remained, but while enough to cheer earth's troop
Of foremost disobedients, heads of Sin's
Long line, who soul enlightened him received
With time-outwearing hope that yet in God
They should partake the fulness of his love.
And with him rose then, in prophetic proof
Of immortality, many a deathless ghost,
Triumphant o'er that blind revenge which wrought
Hell ! thy destruction—thy salvation, earth !

FESTUS. That such will be, the just well know ; and all
Earth's great events and changes tend thereto ;
Its fiery dissolution in the passed,
And supernatural rebirth which now
The chosen and the world-redeemed partake.

PHANUEL. And this shall last, till like the setting sun
Deserting earth, he shall retire to heaven,
With all his captive victors in his train,
Triumphant, and translated evermore
Into the hierarchal skies. Wilt see,
While yet time is, earth's shadowy world within—
The living death she hearts, and, augur-like,
Explore the ominous bowels of the sphere ?
As one great life it is pervadeth all
That bud, breathe, beam, so in the spirit world,
Of God, his will through countless ministries
Confided potently, works publicly ;
And I, the liberating angel, marked
From supramundane time, act to this end,
To me are given the secrets of the centre,
The keys of earth, to lock and to unlock,
Coffer-like. I it was who seized and bound,
At his behest who wills and it is done,

Even on their thrones, the mighty thou wilt see.

FESTUS. Angel of heaven ! I would view these things.

PHANUEL. Nor these alone, but other wonders yet.
The valley Death's dark pinions brooded o'er,
A life-offending night, unvisited
By sun or star, where but the fatuous fire
Of man's weak judgment, wandered till God's hand
Laid o'er the black abyss a bridge of life,
And married earth to heaven's mainland thou'lt see,
Death's grave ; and over him, that monument
Of light, enlightening earth. The gods and fiends
Of old, and all the fictions of man's heart,
Imagined of the future passed for aye,
Thou shalt inspect. Behold this mountain ! We
Must pass through it ; for under lie the gates
Of the invisible regions whereunto
We tend, for a brief season.

FESTUS. On then !

PHANUEL. Bare

Thy marble breast, O mountain, to its depths !

An angel and a man divine demand

A way through these foundations.

FESTUS. And the rocks

Open like mists before thee.

PHANUEL. Follow me !

XLIX.

The soul-state, intermediate 'twixt earth's life
 And the world future, unconceived till seen,
 We search with curious awe ; mark dormant death ;
 Nor, joyless, evil accost, by heaven restrained ;
 From bonds æonian loosened, ere the end :
 View, visionary, the circle of false gods,
 Refractions of the sole and infinite One,
 Conceptions imperfect of deity, held
 Of old, by ignorant and idolatrous man,
 Yet honest, who his best faculties adored
 Unwittingly, his mere passions :—ruined, chained,
 Worshipless, all bear witness to one true,
 All-free, all-necessary, all holy God.
 Error's unreal immortality, see
 Extinguished by God's verity : hear the word
 Divine, by all obeyed.

Hades.

ARCHANGEL, FESTUS, DEATH, LUCIFER.

FESTUS. Almighty God ! sustain me. This is death :—
 And this—I knew not, angel, he was here—
 Is Lucifer, the fallen ; and like a bolt
 Of thunder forged in intramundane air,
 Self-buried within the centre. Not in hell ;
 Where every spirit's work, by fire is tried ;
 For there is fierce exaction of just dues,
 Stern course of forfaults compurgate ; remorse
 Flame-toothed, with bite unflickering, find I him ;
 But here, God-bounden in rest.

PHANUEL, O Lucifer !
 Wake from thy sea-like sleep, time's calm so long,
 Long and unfathomable bath ceased. Arise
 In peace or wrath, rouse from thine age-long trance,
 And see ; earth's representative, and heaven's,
 Stand by thee. Closed, death's intermediate state,
 Heaven's breath blows freely round us as the air
 Vital of all futurity.

LUCIFER. Heaven's just doom
 Respect thou, angel ; nor thou, mortal, erst
 Vassal, last victor, vaunt thou this, nor blame
 Fate's word, for that, forespoken.

FESTUS. I blame no more
 The part thou took'st once in my mortal life ;
 It is gone ; nor spurn thee for delusions dead.
 The blood man's strife once spilled is sunk in earth,
 Run into rivers, seas ; dried up in air ;
 Air, water, earth themselves, all elements, gone.
 With the sin itself ; even sin being expiate now
 By sufferance of just doom ; good done to soul
 Wronged ; and first innocence rightly sought of God.

As therefore came by freedom sin, by sin
Knowledge, and last by knowledge wished return
Godwards, what good hath come of all I bear
Alone at heart ; and if we have both, time passed
Offended God, let me, though in nature not
To forget—forgive what each man once hath felt,
The devil's all-burning grip upon his heart.
Thee view I with compassion ; half with hope.

LUCIFER. Mortal ! I bow to thee, and would to the least
And lowest of all the spirits that God hath made ;
Being in ill his worsen, but that the curse
I am accursed with of impenitency,
Outlasts the elements—outlives all time.

FESTUS. All curses cease with time ; all ill, all woe.
Blessings star forth for ever ; but a curse
Is like a cloud—it passeth.

LUCIFER. It is a cloud
Enshrouds creation. Good and ill perchance
Have one end.

PHANUEL. Mark the uncertain wit he words.
Twice-shot contrariwise his thought-woof seems
Itself to thwart reversive ; not of truth
Takes he yet hand-fast ; nought of right conceives
Indeviable ; and yet, once more, 'tis writ,
With miscreant strife, even faithless in himself,
His final fate he tempts, well-earned, so far
As finite spirit can deem ; nathless, strange change
In him once wrought, like strange to come may augur.

LUCIFER. Angel and mortal, hear ! who else save God
Can fathom nature ? who unveil, he sole,
Except, who clothed ? Me needs not here defend,
Mine office, preappointed ; nor yet tell
What thoughts if vacillant, still perchance not vain
Wholly, have filled my soul since thus. Dread thou
The executant of God's vengeance, for by him
Yon angel, only not almighty, there !
As with a chain of mountains, I was bound,
And hurled into this unformed nebulous life ;
Stripped of all might when mightiest, struck down
While triumphing the loftiest,—enslaved,
When most a monarch o'er both earth and hell,
And made a shadow among shadows here.
It recks not. Let the impenetrable soul
Be ground as through a mill ; know only I
In action or inaction equal woe ;
Suffering, doing, being, one extreme.
Pass on ! we meet again.

FESTUS. And when we do,
May God forgive, as I !

PHANUEL. Mayhap thou wilt yet
Know me as minister of his mercy.

LUCIFER.

I

I look for mercy ? never ! Least, when now
Plotting the sum of evil.

PHANUEL. Behold there Death !
Throned on his tomb—entombèd in his throne ;
Just as he ceased he rests for aye ; his scythe,
Still wet out of its bloody swathe, one hand
Tottering sustains : the other strikes the cold
Drops from his bony brow ; his mouldy breath
Tainteth all air.

FESTUS. I dread him now no more,
Nor hate. He is a vanquished enemy.

PHANUEL. Listen ! he speaks.

DEATH. To you, ye sons of God,
My latest words I utter. Unto him
Who ever lives, and hath for aye destroyed
Me and my reign, give ye this crown usurped,
And lay it at his feet ; and this dulled dart
Which was my sceptre. To the conqueror
Belong these trophies. All the progeny
Of time will soon cease. Lo ! the end's at hand.

KOSMIEL. Thus shall it be, O Death ! and thus it is.
But hear, O Death ! and thou, great Fiend ; the will
Of the Eternal Life, the all-present Good
Is that I free ye both. Thou Death, depart ;
Seek other sphere, where poised with life minute
Thou mayst existence match, and wait God's will,
Largening or lessening. Rise thou, hell's lord. Behold !
Even while I speak, so mighty shows his word,
Those chains though mountain-ribbed, and fit to bind
The tide to the sea's bed, like clotted snow,
Fall from thy feet. Up, then, and do thy will,
Whate'er it be, and wheresoever. Go !

LUCIFER. Let us away, O Death !

DEATH. Let us away !
My realm I leave behind me.

LUCIFER. I mine seek.

FESTUS. Lo ! they are gone. Earth's breath is purified.
The air feels lighter, I breathe easier since.
Who now these giant shades of awe which fill
The midst, the present of the place ? And whose
Yon throne inane whose perilous void bespeaks
A central terror which, unseen, more awes
Than others' presence !

KOSMIEL. Heaven to them thereby
Their state subordinate shows ; the doom of pride.
These are the mighty nothings man of old
Made ; unrealities dread by whom he swore,
Prayed to, and sacrificed ; brother falsehoods all ;
Men like himself, imagination changed
To gods ; for good deeds these, and those for bad :
Or, angels who aspiring to be gods,
Made themselves deathless nothings ; lords of death,

And fire, and judgment ; lords of time and war ;
 Beauty, and strength, and light ; and the long roll
 Of creatural powers and passions deified.
 Abstractions made by men, by God preserved—
 Preserved as shadows thus to realize,
 Before all devotees, their nothingness ;
 Who gave their names to stars which still roam round
 The skies, all worshipless, even from climes
 Where their own altars once topped every hill.
 Attend, their reign is over. These their last
 Oracular utterances alone are true.

ZEUS. O God supreme, sole, all the gods to thee
 Restore their stolen titles. Thou alone
 Hast true right to the names of deity.
 First Cause, and imperceptible, unseen ;
 If apprehended, only by pure soul ;
 Source of all life, transcendent and eterne ;
 Source of all measure, motion, time, and change ;
 Who makest, movest, rulest all ; thyself
 Impassible, immoveable, unmade ;
 The one great Spirit of the universe.
 Who the world made of heaven and earth, as man
 Of mind and body. Father of all life,
 Whose living spirit animates the whole ;
 Governs and guides to ends both blessed and wise ;
 Gave mind its active power ; to nature gives
 Eternal pregnancy, perpetual birth ;
 And reasonable order, aye renewed ;
 The light of heaven, the parent of the world ;
 Who art eternally, and causest things
 To be, which heretofore have never been ;
 The sovereign will, the intellect, the soul,
 The perfect good, the perfect fair, the All ;
 One, immaterial, who by one sole act
 Dost all things comprehend ; and bliss supreme
 Enjoyest, by knowing perfectly thyself.
 Among the worlds how many are thy names !
 For as the sun in divers tongues hath names
 As many, yet to all men is but one,
 So thou, however named, art God the sole.
 Creator and adorer of the heavens ;
 Ruler most high of gods, and sire of man ;
 First, best and greatest of all beings, last ;
 Kind conqueror of all foes ; of all create
 The infinite reason, the substantive cause ;
 The forces of all life, impersonate.
 Thou knowest and foreknowest all at once ;
 Thou givest good and evil to all souls.
 Thine arm sweeps over sea and land ; thine eye
 Pierceth all elements, to the Hadëan shades,
 Where thou art throned, too, as in upper skies ;
 Thy throne coequal with the universe.

The proud thou dost rebuke with death ; with life
 Immortal dost reward the just and true.
 All who have served or loved thee thou dost love,
 And worship givest of all men in the heavens.
 With souls beneficent, innocent, and pure
 Thou dost the largest and the loveliest stars
 For aye consociate. All belong to thee,
 And those who love thee ; heaven and all its worlds.

APOLLO. Soul of the toilful sun, who dost unite
 Creator and created ; light of God,
 And God of light ; of human and immortal
 Spirit, sole physician ; victor thou of sin,
 That hell-born serpent, thee, we gods adore ;
 The sovereign truth, who neither canst deceive
 Nor be deceived ; let earth and heaven their crown
 Offer at the altar of thy fatherly knee.

OSIRIS. Lord of the threefold region, life and death,
 And everlasting being ; king of gods ;
 Builder and benefactor of all worlds ;
 Who cast earth's rock foundation, and with hills
 Walled it about, and moated with the sea ;
 Thou, sitting in the shining house of life,
 Movest with thy foot the everlasting wheel
 Of nature, and man's members mould'st divine ;
 Breathest in them their soul, and takest back ;
 Life-issuing as the sun imparteth light ;
 Glad re-awakener of the soul in heaven.
 Eternal, all-beneficent, Lord of truth ;
 King of obedient natures ; for thy will,
 Perforce or favour, all create obey.
 Distributor of destinies ; lord beloved
 Of spirits in the land of joy divine,
 The land of purity, and light, and peace.
 So should earth be, oracular truth once said,
 And thus it is. Lord of stability,
 For heavenly things alone endure for aye.
 Eternal vivifier of all heavens !
 Before thy face the impure cannot abide.
 The crowned slave mocks thee ; and like hills of sand,
 Crumbling beneath the ruin of thy tread,
 Earth's mountains tremble, and her high places fall.
 Thy name is higher than the highest heaven ;
 Thy glory firmer than the firmament.
 Ruler of spirits ; of heaven's superior spheres ;
 The earthly, and the nether world of hell ;
 Beginningless and endless, the one cause,
 Great, unimpersonable ; whose attributes
 Are beings, and whose thoughts creations ; thou,
 From whose mouth wordlike the round world is born.
 Sovran of souls, and reëstablisher,
 Who plantest the divine life in man's mind ;
 Who weighest man's actions in his heart, ere yet

They bud in speech, or fruit in deed of hand.
 The birth and breath of prophecy ; of time
 Maker ; of all, eternal head and end.
 The Lord of Hades, dwelling in the tomb ;
 Death henceforth clean and sanctified to man ;
 Who with just sceptre rulest righteous souls.
 Joy of the just on earth, the blessed in heaven ;
 Treating all evil with thy sacred scourge ;
 Lord of the visible and invisible life ;
 Being of beings ; causer of causes ; God.

AURMAZD. Illimitable essence, unconceived ;
 One Spirit infinite : from all thy works
 Dissimilar, great dispenser of all good ;
 Best of all best, and wisest of all wise ;
 Father of justice and of equity ;
 Perfect, who knowest all things from thyself.
 The Lord of nature ; not to be bribed by gifts
 Nor mocked by false prayers. Teacher sole of truth,
 To those high souls whose wisdom is their joy,
 Their everlasting strength, their inner heaven ;
 Coheritors, and spirit peers of power,
 These, who by intuition half-divine
 Of the interior light, the light conceive ;
 And, knowing God, all knowledge know of him ;
 Ruler of earth and guardian, king of heaven ;
 Who made this world, that heaven ; gave life to all ;
 And from the radiant fingers of his sun
 Streams indiscriminate blessings upon men ;
 Children of earth and death, but planned to live
 In an immortal future, pure from ill ;
 Earth's mountain evils smoothed off ; the whole orb
 Crystalline made ; themselves all shadowless.
 He, with unerring prescience, perfect power,
 Unchanging kindness acts, and wisest love ;
 Who is the life of heaven ; the threefold one ;
 Uniting deity and humanity,
 Self-circled in the eternity divine ;
 Drives evil's monster dæmon from the earth,
 From human souls sin's shadow, and o'er all
 Life sheds resplendent purity and bliss.

KOSMIEL. False gods have had ere now true worshippers,
 Who honoured names they wrongly deified ;
 The true God false adorers, who him shamed,
 If aught could, they deceitful kneed, in base
 And bloody service, so misdeemed ; or whose
 Nature more horrible than their own they judged.
 But now man's universal heart made pure
 By penitence and penance, every fine
 Paid to the utmost mite, all worship proves
 The faith that's most humane is most divine,
 Dearest to God and worthiest his approval.
 Imperfect apprehension he not blames

Of things above man's intellectual grasp,
 For thought less answerable than for act.
 Of conduct most he judgeth. good or bad.
 Who lives not equal to his highest sense
 Of truth and good ; whose acts, judged by himself
 Wrong, conscience damns ; doth, so far, wilful sin ;
 His natur knowingly degrades ; and God,
 Thereby offended, justly dooms such soul
 To punishment proportionate ; fine being then,
 And righteously, commensurate with offence ;
 O: finite causes infinite, and outweighs ;
 Law earthly more divine than heavenly, proves,
 And man more just, more merciful than God ;
 Which is not nor can be, as thou mayest yet
 Know ere we quit this inward world of shades.

FESTUS. Oblivion's own ; like unrecorded dreams,
 Ænigmas uninterpretable, these,
 The worshipped perish ; the adorers live.

ZEUS. Before the Christian cross and Moslem mosque
 My marble fanes have fallen, and my shrines
 Shrunk like a withered hand, ages ago.
 But now all signs and sacred domes for gods
 To dwell in are extinct. The world is all
 One temple of the truth.

BRAHM. The ages feigned,
 That made time groan to think how old he was,
 And deities in millions, are no more.
 Ageless eternity, and God the sole,
 The royalty of heaven, is at hand,
 Maker, destroyer, saviour ! By all sense
 Incomprehensible ; all things above,
 True being, cause of all ; how, what, unknown.
 One universal mind pervading all ;
 Dwelling in ocean, penetrating earth,
 Touching the heaven, enclosing all the stars ;
 Inhabiting the universe, and through it
 Passing like wind. All souls, all gods or men,
 Shall fail in thee, as air, a phial holds,
 Rejoineeth infinite space, the crystal cell
 Once broken which confined it. Yea, as streams
 To ocean flowing, cease therein, all name
 Losing, all form, so freed from life's sad yoke,
 Created spirit once emanant from God,
 Shall recombine with deity, and enjoy
 In heaven's original bliss its primal power.

BUDH. All things that are shall nothing be at last,
 Save what's resolvable in deity ;
 Yea, the whole world of old before thy face
 Fading, stormlike beneath the sun, shall pass,
 Absorbed in Godhood as some islet cloud
 Melts midmost in the slowly darkening day.

FESTUS. Great be the misconceptions even of gods.

BUDH. Giver, receiver, master of all life ;
 The primal, final, universal soul ;
 Pure deity absorbed in ultimate rest ;
 Who knowest the number of all souls, all stars ;
 Lord of the everduring dome of heaven,
 The region of perfection, home of bliss,
 Who dwell'st alone in the unseen, too pure
 For death-doomed eye ; the Lord who contemplates
 With eyes of love the myriad-nationed world ;
 Lord of all being, ruling from on high,
 Heaven, earth, and man, the sacred trine of life !
 Great sea of spirit, fountain of all forms,
 Issuer of all the laws of life which rule
 Both unintelligent orbs and mightiest minds
 In the well-ordered world, transcript divine
 Of thought eternal in thy boundless breast ;
 Let us to thee give all our titles, thine
 Of right, thine only. Let us, gods of earth,
 Thee worship, God of heaven, as shadows sun ;
 Thee, self-existent, universal Lord,
 Unchangeable, and independent ; all
 Embracing ; by thee planted all the worlds
 Expand like flowers on life's eternal stem ;
 Impenetrable, pure ; judge of all spheres ;
 Author and worker of all laws which rule,
 Material, mental, moral,—all the worlds ;
 Father and founder of all souls, all stars,
 Creator, blessing, hallower of all life ;
 Whose will necessity, whose word is fate ;
 Whose providence inexorable law ;
 Who to the infinite nature thou hast made,
 Givest lavish maintenance ; while in thyself
 Wealth inexhaustible still overabounds ;
 Treasures of mercies unconceived. Who, yet,
 To premonition of the humblest soul
 Inspired by thee to ask what thou hast willed,
 Attentive, grant'st thy saints their least request,
 Were it an orb of light. All holy, hear ;
 We praise thee, we adore thee, God of gods !

ODIN. All-father, permeating the world, all things
 Sustaining, who end'st strife, and holy peace
 Ordain'st, which lasts for aye ; the omniscient, one,
 And undeceivable, thee all gods adore.

FESTUS. And all the lesser shades which move like moons,
 Half darkened by the greater—half illumined—
 Are priests and prophets of the mightier ones ?

KOSMIEL. They are ;—and further round than eye can mark
 The myriads of adorers of each god,
 Confused and prostrate, as their souls awake
 To the objects insubstantial of their prayers.
 Behold ! they kneel to those they hailed on earth
 As makers—as omnipotent—eternal—

And cry for help, for comfort ; none have they
 To give to others or themselves ; these high
 Divinities, which, like shadowy pyramids,
 Show form of strength, but of reality nought.
 Gods of a mightier kind and nobler strain,
 These truly—yea, but half false ; and though now
 Doomed, as the partial copies, so, untrue
 Of the one universal, worthier yet
 Man's trustful prayers and lauds, than those thou seest
 Far off, round yon horizon of death's hall,
 Monstrous, uncouth, fear-gendered, barbarous ;
 Such as were Rimac, who by Lima once
 Sat, aboriginal oracle, imaged huge ;
 Till, smote by Christian mace, the immarbled lie
 Rejoined chaotic formlessnesses : strewn
 In grim and grinning fragments round its base :—
 Or where in Kirauēa's lava-land
 And island hills ablaze, fierce Pelé, thought
 Goddess of fire, mid burning billows basked,
 And music of the clashing hills of flame ;
 Or trode, triumphant, the tempestuous glow ;
 Such too the gory gods of western climes,
 Who yearly claimed their feast of blood. The false,
 The base, the brutish deities give way,
 And all their sacred follies in their train,
 Before the earthquake truth, engulfing all.
 Woe to the false gods, woe ! to prophet, priest,
 And worshipper, all woe !

FESTUS.

Hark ! round the earth

Each soul hath found a tongue and uttereth woe.
 Lo ! from their thrones the man-made gods descend,
 And rend their robes and trample on their crowns,
 And hurl away their sceptres. Woe to all
 The gods and idols of the heart of man !
 Their sun is set for ever in the night
 Which was ere light was. Surely it is more
 To be true man or woman than false god,
 And falsen prophet. God alone, the true,
 The God of heaven, and all, shall be confessed
 And worshipped.

KOSMIEL.

Worshipped, witnessed, too,

By all : the faithful and the faithless—saint
 And sinner. See, like clouds, the gods disperse,
 Into their preoriginal nothingness.
 And now the woe of those misguided, blind
 To the demoniac madness of their creeds,
 Shall be transformed to joy ; they who adored
 Their dreamlike deities, merely incompetent,
 Shall, by God's grace, essential cause of all
 Prior to all self-manifestive power,
 Wisdom, or word, or act, reason, or will,
 Their errors see transfigured into truth.

Listen, ye souls of men ; all worship cease
 Of what is false and fleeting ; to your minds
 Self-believed, always free, but bounded aye,
 Fitted, or more or less ; but now to truth
 Transferred your lost allegiance shall receive
 Just warrant of its right, perpetual peace,
 Conscience of truth, bliss indestructible.
 One only true God can be, has been, is,
 False gods there never have been, nor false surrs ;
 Save the abnormal shadows which betimes
 Leap into life around him, and to man's
 Weak sense owe all existence. So of these,
 Parheliacal gods which mocked men's minds,
 And, lighting them to darkness, left them there.
 False gods have never been ; nor false truths ; forms
 Partial and finite of the Infinite one
 Who made all, all disposeth ; who of all,
 Hebrew and heathen, worldling and elect
 Is worshipped, once as objects prayerwards served,
 While of necessity falling short of truth,
 To upraise, through all earth's times and climes, man's son
 And one the Spirit of Evil, Dis, Lucifer,
 Typhon, Misophanes, Satan, Aherman,
 Hades, what name soe'er priest pleaseth best,
 In nature still and destiny, one and same,
 Creation's imperfections personate.
 And Evil vitalised and as being conceived !
 False gods there never have been ; but of God
 False names, false notions numberless. Behold
 In these the transient types of one eterne ;
 Each several aspect deified, of Truth ;
 The obeliskal One, the primal three ;
 The powers divine and cardinal of heaven.
 Yet prayer, preferred with a pure heart, to Baal,
 As neither heard nor answered could it be
 By non-existent daemon, might, by him.
 Who sits enthroned in unthought purity,
 The lord and lover of the world, be ta'en,
 And righteously fulfilled ; so angels deem.
 But in the depths of man's own nature, see,
 As in a lake, reflected, hills, skies, clouds,
 His heaven, his hell, and all his creature gods,
 Inverted, and distorted, and obscured :
 All which must vanish ere the truth divine
 In glory supervene. Idolatry
 Worshipped God meanly, as though knowable
 Through generative energies and powers ;
 Not as man's great regenerative Lord.
 For life was of the Angels, as was law :
 But love in place of law, as final judge,
 In lieu of life, heaven's immortality
 Christ taught, hence what in false faiths energies,

Were deemed, are symbols only in the true,
 God's omnipresence seems not sensuous ;
 Unless he be in us we are not in him.
 Signify all things ; nothing represents.
 And therefore were the chosen race alone,
 To whom the godly secret was confined,
 Lapsing from faith, rebuked and charged with sin
 The general world, unconscious pietists
 Of falsest creeds and errors, God allowed
 To live on, unproved, till came the time
 When all the mysteries of heaven and earth
 Were put in evolution ; are but now
 Fulfilling.

FESTUS. Lo ! the nations of the dead,
 Which do outnumber all earth's races, rise ;
 And high in sumless myriads over head
 Sweep past us in a cloud, as it were the skirts
 Of the Eternal passing.

A VOICE. Souls, arise
 To deathless life !

KOSMIEL. It is God speaks. Let us hence.
 The general judgment is in hand,—God's hand.
 The souls of those whom God loves circle us.
 For thee, thy lot thou knowest. As a seed
 Buried in earth doth multiply itself
 Full fifty fold, so will thy nature when
 Changed, it lifts head in the air divine of heaven.

FESTUS. Out of the depths of earth and the world's womb
 Thine unborn angels seek thee, God, all love ;
 Now is thine hour for which all hours were made,
 All life created, all things else ordained ;
 Be it the hour of mercy, Lord ! to all,
 Now reap the righteous, righteous but in thee
 Any, their guerdon. Evil to repay
 With good was Christ's command, and earth with heaven
 Is thus the great example of his word.
 Do thou Lord be with us. In thee we live ;
 Our treasure, trust, and triumph is in thee,
 God's pure humanity ; whence salvation comes
 To the countless all thou dost redeem. Betrothed
 To heaven was earth upon her natal day.
 The ages sweep around me with their wings
 Like angered eagles cheated of their prey.
 Reach forth your arms ye angels. See them come.
 I hear the orderly torrent of their wings
 Hitherward streaming. Lo ! the glowing skies
 Are rushing to receive us. Oh ! rejoice
 All ye that are immortal, and whate'er
 Hath been predestined to eternal end.
 The day determined ere all time was, dawns.

L.

Ill, now released,
 Reckless of late discomfiture, as head
 Of human strife 'gainst heaven, God's ends world-wide,
 Inapt to appreciate, as his woeful fiends
 He erst had promised, makes, an angel tells
 To earth's dear saints, and how, one last and worst,
 Attempt to o'erthwart God's just design. But as when
 Some red volcano, scattering burning death,
 The aggregated ire of ages lifts
 Off earth's heart, saved from sphere-disruptive woes,
 So, evil's ultimate force, hell's following, tends
 In way unthought, unreckoned by itself,
 To goodward, vanquished by almighty good.

Paradisal Earth.

ANGELS and SAINTS—AN ANGEL descending ; FESTUS.

SAINT. Whence art thou ?

ANGEL. I ? from heaven, and thither tend ;—
 One moment here to bid all souls prepare.
 Our Lord, the prince of peace eternal, comes
 With his victorious hosts, to judge the world.

SAINT. What victory hath our Liberator now gained ?

ANGEL. One final, over death and hell. Shout, earth !
 Thy freedom is accomplished, and thy foes
 Brought down to endless ruin.

SAINT. Angel, speak !

We burn to learn the tidings of this war,
 Whereof thou tellest and doubtless wast a part.

ANGEL. Hot from the fight I come. 'This lightning blade
 Hath holpen well to thin the infernal rout,
 Which back hath fled to hell, howling like winds.
 But let me, at your will, ye peaceful saints,
 Relate what happed to us, from first. The hour
 Was come in Heaven when Beniel, Son of God,
 Bowing his head before the Omnipotent,
 Who doubled every blessing infinite
 Wherewith he had enriched his destined one
 From first, rose from his glorious throne, and stepped
 Into his sun-bright car, calling aloud
 God's angels to attend him while he went
 To judge the earth, as foreordained of old ;
 That heaven and earth might view the majesty
 And mercy of the God of all. We came,
 Selectest spirits, countless ; crowded bright
 As the great stream of stars which flows through heaven,
 Fast by the foot of God, each wave a world ;
 Eager to eye this act of glory long
 Talked of, in bliss, and now to be achieved.
 Forth from the starry towers, and world-wide walls,
 Of heaven, we set in high and silent joy,
 And journeyed half our way through space, when lo !

A sight which checked the foremost flaming ranks,
 That halted frontwise, working doubt at first,
 But triumph after. Shielded and drawn up close,
 Behind a broken and decaying world,
 From whence the light had vanished like the light
 Out of a death-shrunk eye, sat Lucifer,
 Midst in the power of darkness, and the hosts
 Of hell, enthroned sublime ; and all were still,
 As ambushed silence round the foe of God.
 But oh ! how changed from him we knew in heaven,
 Whose brightness nothing made might match nor mar :
 Who rose and it was morn ; who stretched his wing,
 Or stepped, from star to star ; so changed he showed
 Most like a shadowy meteor, through whose guise
 The stars dim glint—woe-wasted, pined with pain.
 And by his side there sate or shrank a shape
 We angels knew not, but the son of God
 Knew him, and called him Death ; whom when he saw,
 Arousing, after, out of sleep intense,
 That unrealmed tyrant drew his mortal dart,
 And drove it through himself,—a shade, shade-quelled,
 Then to that chief of mischief and his fiends,
 Who, thick as burning stones that from the throat
 Of mount eruptive foul the benighted sky,
 Shot up triumphant into air, as they
 Beheld our ranks move on, thus spake our chief,—
 Not wrathfully, but sternly pitying :
 Hell's wretched remnant ! wherefore crouch ye here ?
 Is it to sue destruction, or to bar
 My passage ? If it be, in both ye err.
 And will ye trust yourselves again to war
 With me, God-missioned ? Have I not overcome
 Ye separately both ? Speak, brutal Death ?
 Fit follower thou, and fellow to all woes,
 Wherefore this instantaneous haste from hell,
 And both from Hadëan bondage, thus again
 So soon to compass mightiest wickedness,
 And tempt extremest wrath ? Speak, head of hell !
 To him thus Lucifer : Predestined foe,
 Prince of the face of God, first-born of heaven,
 Head of all angels, truth-fulfilling spirit,
 Thy power I not defy, but even in peace,
 I war with fate. My life is to destroy.
 Evil hath more activity, if good
 More strength : and one must wear the other out.
 The more august the sin, so much the more
 Is my necessity. Yon earth hath been
 The battle plain of heaven and hell. From God,
 Who knoweth all things, and from thee to whom
 Such knowledge as befits, he yields, 'twere vain
 To hide my purpose, which for a thousand years,
 Of bondage, hath grown in me and lived on,

Toad-like within a rock—vital where all
 Beside was death—to seize the nascent souls
 Of men as they arose from death to life,
 And sweep them off in midst of all these hosts
 Assembled for that cause, here, as thou seest,
 To hell;—the universal race of man.
 But if ordained that not on them, but thee
 And thine, old hate shall satisfy itself,
 Approach no nearer; for we live by death;
 Or turn fate's tide let Him, who solely can.
 Ceasing thereat, his host upraised a shout
 Which shook the stars revibrant. Then to him
 Our Chief spake tolerantly: It is well God rules.
 Lo! to what base extremes infernal pride
 Can push a princely spirit, once of heaven.
 Thee we will not destroy now, for thine hour
 Hath yet to come—when least thou thinkest it.
 God's wrath thou hast endured in punishment,
 Not yet his power. Away! I warn ye hence,
 Ere wrath ride forth again. To him the Fiend
 Answered: God rules not us, the unordered damned,
 Nor reck's of hell. For ages past belief,
 Unless by those who like ourselves denied
 God's own eternity by creature mind,
 However lofty, hardly compassed—we
 Our pain have borne without remorse, or sign
 Of pity from our Maker. Shall we now
 Believe, while thus confronting him again,
 He means us better? Never worse than now.
 Therefore I say to ye, On! mightiest fiends,
 On! Let us reap companions for our woes,
 Or earn annihilation! As when of old,
 By bard, or soothsayer—but in vain—averred,
 The swift'ning shadow of some baleful god,
 Himself impalpable, swept through air, and lo!
 A high towered city tottered to its foot,
 Rock-arched; or many breasted fleet, lay strewn,
 Straggling, like leaflets torn from out a book,
 Upon the tide intempest; so bent
 To involve all soul in ruin, flew the fiend
 Towards his marked prey. At the mere word, to bar
 His way depute, whose ways are over all
 His works, hell's fiery phalanx instant rushed.
 A million spears blazed forth their challenge bright,
 As of as many tongues. Serene our ranks
 Stood like the stars o'er thunder. The Angel Power
 Sate in his orb'd car, and breathed on them;
 And they were rolled up like the desert sands,
 Before the burning wind; throne wrecked on throne,
 All ruined and foredone. Pursue! he cried,
 Nor let them near the earth we go to judge.
 And we pursued, as many as he chose,

And chased from sphere to sphere that wretched wreck
Of falsest fiends :—and I, it seems, am first
Of all my victor brethren, to declare
The triumph passed and coming ; and your hearts
With tidings cheer of him to whom be due
Lauds for his so efficient breath.

SAINT.

Behold

Another warrior angel from on high,
Like angels, singly always or in hosts.

ANGEL. It is the most dread Azrael, unto whom,
Exterminative, Death's sword is given as boon.

SAINT. What sayst thou heavenly one ?

AZRAEL.

To the extreme bound

Of light's domain we chased the flying foe,
Who on the confines of the lower air
Once rallied at their leader's stern command,
Whom more they fear, or seem to fear, than God.
They halted, formed, and faced us. I and mine
As on we came in order, full career,
Exalted by success, hoped ardently
One more convincing contest : but in spite
Of future woe, or the tempestuous threats
Of the great fiend who marshalled them, each eyed
His neighbour pale ; their trembling shook all air ;
And each one lift his arm, but no one struck.
Awhile in deaththroelike suspense they stood ;
Or like the irresolution of the sea
At turn of tide ;—then, wheeled, and fled amain ;
And in one mass immense broke down from heaven,
Cliff-like ; there, let them lie. Such fate have fiends ;
Such self-accumulate loss, such home, such hell.

FESTUS. And saw'st thou hell, the abode of fiends ?

AZRAEL.

We saw ;

Nor unsurprised ; for round the mountain walls
Chasmy, that prop hell's nebulous domelet, dun
And dim as a star quenched, that regropes its way
To chaos, and to nothing, gleamed in light
Untarnishable these just words ; God is love ;
Corrective, perfective : hope, spirits never
To quit, save by due penitence, and consent
With law divine : thence hope ; thence liberty ;
Thence heaven. Be these yours, now and ever. Hope
So angels fallen may yet to upper spheres
Gradually evade, or otherwise as fate rules ;
But there now, flouting fate, the recreant rests
Of that huge host, once world-compact, astound
At their own ruinous failure ; forceless now
Their caitiff force for ever, as 'twould seem,
Self-blamed, all troubled, each other chiding, groan.
And we returned, hoping to meet, as charge
To all was given, the Lord our glory here.

L.I.

Man's final doom conceive: the award to all
 Earth's tribes of souls by spirits elect, their chiefs
 Saintly, themselves through purifying rule
 Of chastening spheres, to proximate perfectness
 Long trained; all rational hosts, by boundless love,
 Brought round to service reasonable and just,
 Of life's beneficent lord. A million minds
 Fixed momentarily on him, and countless more,
 In rest, act, sin or strife, all seen at once,
 Show but as one to God, all man one soul.
 Blessed, when in spiritual sacrament as now
 All creature being, by God invited, taste
 His infinite essence, who all life within,
 Soul with soul pure communes. We glimpse the close;
 And swiftness than an angel's wings outpace
 Time's plodding feet, things ripen unto their end.

The Judgment of Earth.

BENIEL, KOSMIEL, ANGELS and SAINTS.

KOSMIEL. Let all the dead rejoice; their Saviour comes,
 Invisible, but His missioned Angel, see;
 With clouds of angels circled like a sun
 Belted with light, and brighter than all light.
 Lo, he descends and seats him on his throne;
 Alighting like a new made sun in heaven.
 The world awaits thee Lord! Rise, souls of men,
 Buried beneath all ages from the first;
 Numbered, unnumbered, rise ye; death, no more,
 Hath power upon ye than the ravaging sea
 Upon the stars of heaven. Ye elements
 Give back your stolen dead. He claimeth them,
 Whose they both were and are and e'er shall be.

ANGEL OF EARTH. See! to wipe from his word
 The dust of years,
 He comes, he comes, the Lord,
 In his love,
 Man's God, reappears;
 Through his angels depute
 To abolish life's fears;
 To bless and to save
 From death and the grave;
 To redeem and deliver,
 For ever and ever.

BENIEL. I come in God's great name sin to repay,
 With holiness, death with deathlessness, man's soul
 With God's spirit; yea, all evil with all good.
 Ye angels, ye elect, who with God's love
 Informed, shall rule with me o'er life, assume
 Your seats of judgment. Judge ye all in love,
 The love which God, the all-father, hath to you.

SAINTS. May He the father of spirits, teach us how

To judge ourselves ; so may we others judge.

BENIEL. Our maker, heaven's supreme, the all-perfect One
Will us, his humbler servitors, so fill
With the spirit divine grace, mercy, that in you,
All judging, God shall judge, and soul by soul,
Before ye, ever brought to cleansing pains
Of self reproach consigned, for all offence
Conscious 'gainst God and man, ye so shall train
By precept and example 'like divine,
As shall all lowlier nature raise to sense
Worthier of being, as pure and true to God,
And fruitful sole of good ; from sphere to sphere,
Of every virtue, thus refined, and raised,
Ye saints of choice with all ye rule, and serve,
One vast equality so attained of bliss,
With us shall enter heaven.

SAINTS. Be it where God will ;
But now we render back to thee the love
Which is thine own, none else is worthy thee ;
Prime essence, virtue of all excellence.

BENIEL. Whate'er the sign, the emblem, chartered law,
Treaty or covenant, man in ages passed
Hath boasted, of the spirit that should redeem
From sin and ignorance, idols many and foul,
His spirit to purify and lead to enjoy
Visions of peace triumphant, glory and power ;
Know all are symbols only of truth ; and know
To creature thought, God in his wholeness seems
Inestimable ; so these conceived him best
Partwise, as acting through main energies,
Sevenfold, or trebly substacked, increate
Aspects of being ; they deemed, but vainly ; those,
With more or less of majesty, as a cloud
Sun-gilded, of the storm's tempestuous breath,
Shows nobler than the minimous gust man's lips
Force on air froze ; so, more than all things God ;
All spirit, all substance, manifest or concealed.
God know ye one pure spirit, the all-potent force,
Eradiative of soul, as suns of rays,
Which time by time, to their central source return
Their end, their reason sole ; intelligences,
Angels all, sons of God, to him, of all
Created, spirit and matter, sire and sum ;
For as in man's breath congealed, cross, starlet, flower
Sphere crystalline, form, so into life all being,
Harmonious and symmetric, God imbreathes.
Behold, this day I dwell with ye on earth,
Time doling for the accomplishment of things,
Judicial, curative, rewardful ; lawed
Even to the last. The next shall be in heaven,
Where ye shall meet the all-father, and remain
In the eternal presence ; the all in one.

The sole true being of the universe.

The sole essential ; but self-existent, God.

SAINTS. No god but God is. He is his own prophet.

God, self-sufficient, Lord of the great throne,

Higher than heaven, and wider than the earth ;

Vaster and more profound than the abyss ;

Whose is the kingdom of the universe.

Who comprehendeth all things ; made the sun

Star earth with flowers, and with his golden sword

Reap, like a labourer in the fields of light,

One everlasting harvest round the world ;

He made the moon succedent ; he ordained

Darkness and light ; he causeth life and death.

The heavens and earth stand firm at thy command ;

And all that is between them and beneath.

High, gracious, mighty, worthy of all praise

Art thou in this life, Lord ! and life to come.

Bounteous and wise, thou lovest the merciful ;

The holy, the forgiver thou of sin,

The accepter of repentance ; faithful, just ;

Giver of peace, victorious ; excellent

Are all thy names, thy ways ; eternal Power !

Thou knowest all things hidden and divulged.

Beside thee there is no God, thou art one.

Although within the world, the world without ;

Who was ere time or space was ; and now is,

And will be though they both should cease for aye.

Nigher to every being than its life,

Too mighty still to live in aught create ;

Too holy to conform to things of time ;

Too perfect in all excellence to change.

All angels he hath made, all heavens, all orbs ;

Maintains and metes their natures, motives, ends,

Accordant with his mighty will : foreknows

All knowable things, and comprehends all known.

He knows the number of the drops of dew,

Spring's every leaflet, autumn's every seed,

And sums the quivered shafts of every sun.

The movement of all thought within man's brain ;

The stir of every feeling in his heart ;

The rise of every longing in his soul ;

Sin's sooty trail and virtue's radiant track,

Traced in the inmost spirit, shows unto him

Clear as the course of comets in the sky.

He knoweth his own secrets, and conceals

From the united gaze of all create,

His infinite aim, his purpose absolute.

Neither to be resisted nor reversed

Is his decree, delayed nor dallied with ;

For at the fated moment all's fulfilled.

Without all quality, pure essence, he

Ears hath not, but hears all things ; eyes hath not,

But all things sees ; nor distance is, nor dark
To his divine cognition. To his touch
All innermost substances are palpable ;
The hearts of all things patent to his glance.
Wise in his ways and just in his decrees,
Nothing hath being but by him produced ;
And though permitted evil, to him sole
Pertains the right of knowing why it is,
For God must not be questioned. He alone
Hath all right, privilege, and prerogative.
The world exists but by his sufferance.
All things belong to him ; and into all,
Brought out of mere privation into light,
He entereth as possessor, maker, lord.
Not from necessity aught created he ;
Nor that to him were need of lower life ;
Nor shadow of vantage from the universe ;
But from his lovingkindness, grace, and will
He breathed a vital blessing over space,
Quickened the void infinitude with light,
And filled the heavens with angels, earth with men.
Who love him, worship him, obey him, he
From his beneficent nature well rewards ;
Not from their merit ; nor tie absolute
Existent 'twixt well-doing and reward,
For merit man hath none, but all is grace ;
Nor can God under obligation lie
To aught created, principle, or power.
Man all receives from, nothing gives to God,
But that he hath received ; the gift to praise,
The grace to thank ; the glory to adore.
Dear Lord, all sire, all saviour, for thy gifts,
The world were poor in thanks, though every soul
Should nought but breathe them ; every blade of grass,
Yea every atomie of the earth and air
Thanks utter like to dew. Thy ways are plain
Only in thine own light. And this great day,
By one unfolded with thy spirit replete,
Unveils all nature's laws and miracles ;
All to thee all as one. Thy judgment all
Wise mercy, Lord of love, the world's no more
Illegible ; all is bright as new-born star.
All men have sinned ; but not a single soul
Less than the countless all can satisfy
The ultimate triumph which to us belongs
Who in mortality strove, and won ; or failed
As these, the unnumbered, till death after. See !
BENIEL. The book of life is opened. Heaven begins.

LII.

Judge not all heretic belief of old
 As wholly fabulous. The Iranian seer
 Hath left it writ, and our hearts hold it true,
 That evil and good, twin powers, as light and dark,
 Were destined to contest with varying mean,
 The world while e'er it lasts ; but in the sum
 Of things, the final conquest is our God's.
 The grand intent of being, and its main stress,
 Is towards its best, the all-perfect. Rest in God !
 Heaven, highest and all enfolding, fills at last
 Its infinite bounds ; reward of love divine ;
 Salvation, not alone of this soul, view,
 Whose steps we have tracked through time, nor total man's
 Only, but of all spirits. Our God, in fine,
 Drawing his thousand-folded veil of light,
 Shows to the world, the astound and jubilant world,
 As that from first forefixed and justified,
 The universe cleansed of evil ; hell for aye
 Abolished ; the holy happy ; all create
 Redeemed ; themselves all bliss ; all love, their God.

Heaven.

THE DEITY, ANGELS, SAINTS, SPIRITS ELECT, FESTUS, LUCIFER
 THE RESTORED ANGELS.

THE RECORDING ANGEL. All souls of men are judged, save one,
 earth's chosen,
 And last of God's elect.

GOD. Him, too from first
 'Mong spirits predestined saved, though to the last
 Tried, longest disciplined, see ye entering ! Come
 Immortal, I have saved thy soul to heaven.
 Come hither. All hearts bare themselves to me,
 As clouds unbind their bosoms to the sun.
 Wealthy was thine in gifts of good ; and, grant
 Its guilt most lay in lavished time and thought
 On uneternal ends, unuseful truth,
 Knowledge, mind-power, and worldly sway, thy tests,
 Let pass, for one whose life 'twas, all to serve ;
 Let light outweigh the darkness.

SAINTS.

Saints, rejoice !

ELECT SPIRITS. Welcome, free spirit, long lost. long hoped to
 heaven,

Where pure perfection reigns, the world of gods.
 We, too, rejoice. Here now the Spirit Divine
 Of inspiration and commune with all
 Man's great and infinite help ; the ally whose aid
 Outworths all arms, all armies ; soul create,
 And soul Creator, each in other's face
 Before all ; soul, if falacious, sanctified
 By voluntary return to God ; such pain
 Suffered, as righteously by Him decreed,
 And profitably to be endured ; hence not

Infinite ; just punishment in the passed,
Being a joy to have borne ; all truth, foretold
In heaven accomplished, let behold and hear,
Now even fulfilments hasten towards their end.

SAINTS. Lord thou of all the covenants, life and truth,
Law, love and peace, revealed and unrevealed,
With man made ; when from Paradisal dust
And heavenly archetype, thine image, earth
Received her master ; with whose kind conform
Imperfect, variously, each soul of man
Some semblance of the vast Humanity
Conceived of thee, ensamples ; and through such,
As angel, deathless, or, as mortal, man,
The world-starred infinite fills ; we thank thee now,
For this Thy Spirit's full harvest, and rejoice
In all Heaven's joy.

FESTUS. Could I my soul outpour
In thanks Lord, as a river rolling ever,
Too scant it were for all I owe.

SAINTS. Too scant,
Albeit life's years were as earth's atoms many ;
Too scant for even immortal life to prove
What even a moment's long enough to shew
In the Eternal's glance, all seen at once,
Thy love of good, thy thanks to Him who saves.
One heart-throb sometimes earneth Heaven, one tear.

FESTUS. Father of Angels and all spirits ; of men
Maker ; of worlds and souls ; thee, let all thank
Who have lived, and deathless witness to thy grace.
Let me too, Holy One, who hast chosen me
From old eternity, whiles as yet I lay
Hid like a thought in God unuttered ; thee
Creator sole, sole Saviour, praise, sole judge.
Sun of the soul, whose day is now all noon,
Eternal ; who of the universe makest one heaven ;
We praise thee ; heaven doth praise thee ; praise thyself,
Who only worthily canst ; all we being dumb.

GOD. What wouldst thou Lucifer ? The soul thou seek'st
Of old to ruin as in mock, is here.
And all his race, progressive in all spheres,
Their purifying probation passed, shall time
By time arriving hither joyful join
Heaven's blissful hosts.

LUCIFER. Each separate sphere, I know
Hath its particular evil : good alone
Is, as of God, whole, absolute. But for me
I have mine own affairs to attend to, much
As times have changed ; but is not this soul mine ?
Have I not part and lot in him the most
Of all, not he ?

GOD. Evil ! hear thou my words.
In the beginning, ere I bade things be ;

Or, finite filling o'er with the infinite,
 Ere ever I begat the worlds on space,
 I knew of him, and saved him pre-elect.
 Son of mine own humanity, in the face
 Of every fault, all weakness, by him owed
 To that defective nature he finite
 Could 'scape not ; and which I as infinite, judge
 And maker, cognizant of, in mine own breast
 Feel yet through all the frailties of things made ;
 And so, like feelingly can judge. What God
 In fatherly magnanimity chose to make,
 Let his divine humanity, (fallen soul,
 Through self-amending penitence purified,
 Seeking return, acceptance) therefore save,
 For I abide not sin, and in my sight
 Where righteousness and equity only ; this
 On my part, on the world's that, ever live,
 Sin cannot be but temporary ; in fine
 It is destroyed for ever, and made nought.
 Spirit of evil, this mortal loved me ;
 With all his doubts, he never doubted God ;
 But from doubt gathered truth, as snow from clouds,
 The most and whitest from the darkest. Such
 His aim was, such his trust to gain for good,
 With many a shortcoming his most strong desire
 Was to do good among men ; to show life's end
 In knowing, loving, God ; and making known
 His boundless grace ; him vindicating from charge
 Of partial choice inequitable ; and wrath
 Unjust, of endless reprobation, aimed
 'Gainst sinners unpermitted to repent.

LUCIFER. Now know I who for certain are the elect ;
 The Sons of God predestined all to bliss.

GOD. This too know truth ; truth once to thee foretold
 Howbeit incredulous thou ; he, man, so versed
 Become, in science of all nature's laws,
 The more he knew, conclusive each of good,
 As all approved themselves, through perfect means
 To happiest ends, the more he God believed.

LUCIFER. Belief is not much as a test.

GOD.

Belief

Means more or less. Belief in virtue means
 Not mere existence, but the practised mean
 On all incumbent, towards that happier end
 From first designed for man ; belief in truth
 Means active search for verity ; and in man
 Duties of heavenly charity, and all acts
 That tend to peace ; and makes a test of tests.
 Once failed he ; once, nor failed nor won ; the last,
 Power's test, he passed ; nor feigning, sought he pomp,
 Life-luxury, sensuous ease, nor mere command,
 Nor privileged gain ; but the world's weal ; which, won,

In concert with the sage, and so secured
 Through moral nature and law social, man
 Made perfect thus, ere yet was list to fall,
 His will with mine, self-oned, was, all to end ;
 And so foreclose with provident care earth's orb
 O'eraged, nor longer apt for use of such
 Exalted lineage, then too fine to match
 Their sphere's coarse elements. Add, for that peace he chose
 For earth and man, though losing for himself
 Thereby both life and power ; and for that good
 He chose 'gainst ill, and ill forgave, by ill
 Most wronged, and myriads with him ; and made pure
 By divine fire, of sin consumptive, he
 With all the vanquishing hosts of saints who trode
 Their nature's evils, and the bodily faults
 Of imperfection freely down, by stress
 Of upward striving steps resumed, restored
 In heaven which gave them being, see all here.
 And if in life's extreme he sued for death,
 'Twas but to bring him quicklier to my feet.

LUCIFER. I own misreckoning somewhat, and might ask
 Forgiveness, if I knew of whom.

GOD. Thou knowest

There are but two ; the soul thou hast wronged ; and God.

LUCIFER. And where's the soul I have not wronged ?

GOD. And where

The soul, of me forgiven, which hath not all
 Its injurers pardoned ?

LUCIFER. Lord ! as yet forbear.

GOD. All thou couldst do would ne'er have moved his rest
 From that celestial rock, whence first he heard
 Issuant God's voice ; not 'mid the lightning's flash
 Deafening, nor earth-ground thunder, but the calm
 Outspeech of truth self-regulated in tone,
 That law is love defined, in justest bounds,
 To soul adapt, and all things else create.

LUCIFER. I leave thee, Festus : Here thou wilt be happy.
 To be in heaven is God to love for ever.
 And him thou must love here. Here thou wilt find
 All thou canst love, and oughtst ; for souls reborn
 Of Deity, made and moulded over again
 Into his sunlike emblems, multiply
 His might and love ; the saved are suns, not earths ;
 And with original glory shine of God.

While I, e'er deepening in my darkness, live
 Without one hope-gleam 'cross the gloom of being.

BENIEL. Father of men and angels, sons of God,
 Both in thy holy spirit so named, I pray
 Once more to thee, who from the initials know'st
 To the end, all life thou hast made, one prayer.

GOD.

'Tis heard.

FESTUS. Let us part, Spirit. It may be, in the coming,

That as some sun extinguished now, shall yet
 In the ends of heaven restituent, shine again,
 Light-crowned ; so thou, and all soul, sometime worth
 It would seem God's making, maybe worth forgiving ;
 And, purified by steady and upward strain
 Of spirit accordant with Divinity ;
 Blessed to eternity with the ingrowth of truth,
 And passion of obedience to his law,
 Then viewed impartially as just ; all mind,
 Self uttering assonantly with his pure will,
 Ta'en back into his bosom, shall in fine
 Be one with him who is all, and all in one.

LUCIFER. It may be then I shall cease to be. Farewell.
 Forgive me in that I tempted thee.

FESTUS. I am glad.

LUCIFER. Farewell, ye angels ; look your last on me.
 I tempt no more. I am tempted ; but of good.
 I go.

ANGELS. Hope still.

LUCIFER. My hope's to cease, I go.

Let me become but nothing, and all soul
 Shall joy for ever. This, Lord, be mine end.

GOD. Stay, Spirit ; it suits not Heaven's eternal laws
 Of good, that all create be at once unmade,
 Nor yet that Ill be immortal. In all space
 Is joy and glory, and the spiritual spheres,
 Exultant in the sacrifice of sin
 And creatural defect, unfilled by faith,
 Leap forth as though to welcome earth to heaven.
 Shadows are passed away. Through all is light.
 Man is as high above temptation now
 And where by grace he always shall remain,
 As ever sun o'er sea ; and sin is burned
 In hell to ashes with the dust of death.
 The world itself is but a faded dream
 To souls which lived therein ; and thou art null ;
 And thy vocation useless ; gone with them.
 Not all in vain, nor fruitless shew the years
 Millennial of thine exile from earth's face,
 Glad smiling in that absence ; absence most
 Fertile to thee, lone penitent of all passed,
 In bettermost resolve, as Heaven, in this
 Forgiveness asked of man, now eyes, elate ;
 Ask of another yet ; and time may be
 Heaven's star-mailed hosts shall joy in thee again ;
 And the lost tribes of angels who with thee
 Wedded themselves to woe, first ; and who dwell
 Around the dizzying centres of all worlds
 Blessed with the blessedest be again ; for thus
 Salvation to the lost accrues, far passed
 Thine ultimate thought, but wholly in scope of mine.
 Speak, Beniel, thou whose just and simple thought

Reflects and concentrates the mind of Heaven
 In all its spheres and orders, tell how truth
 And the good growth implanted once in spirits
 Our heavenly mansions claimed, of late, how long !
 Pride's troubled serfs, still hesitant, have matured.

BENIEL. The hope already there, thine eyes, O God,
 All seeing, had viewed from its first rise in what
 Was fiend-world once, and thou hadst bade me seek
 In gravest ambassage, and by sustenant word
 Encourage and confirm hath, mid those hosts
 Torturous of fallen immortals, sad to see,
 So well sped, hear ye blessed, and be glad
 Ye holy, that this hour 'tis such, as when
 On earth at dead ebb, moveless, waits the main
 But a single impulse from its heart, and lo !
 Just palpitant on the welkin, nor from sky
 Wholly distinguishable ; one throb imparts
 Heaven's touch initial ; so, that anguished sphere
 Of angelhood distort, an ocean mass
 Of vanquished powers remorseful, now no more
 Rebels, 'gainst good contestant armed ; but tossed
 Of soul, surgelike in sea ; now, forward swayed
 By rational trust in truth ; for how, if just
 Man to permit repent, shall righteous Heaven
 Bar angel of like boon ? drawn backwards, now,
 By dread lest ill desires, deeds, worse deserts,
 Outweighing faith in God's all mercifulness,
 Should root them there ; seems but to await the word
 Instituent, to renew all to right end,
 And form afresh a more felicitous flood.

GOD. Know all ye Heavens, that thought is alway mine
 Of choice, and time's use made by soul, oft turned
 Conversive of things made to their true end.

LUCIFER. True 'tis, despair of happier change for them
 In them shows not unpalliated. But were
 Repentance theirs, and all the fruits I see
 And know it gains ; have long known ; how could yet
 That knowledge me advantage ? For howbeit all
 God's enemies small or great err, much of good
 Miscalculant, yet their sin, their nature alike
 If mighty is measurable ; mine only of all
 Indomitable, indocile, changeless ill,
 Seems infinite ; and my being at God's hands
 Asks but annihilation.

GOD. Spirit of ill,
 Be it not so. In those sunbrightening words,
 Though dimmed by wholesome fears, all Heaven may trace
 The light-growth of those star clear seeds first sown ;
 Deep in thy spiritual consciousness, by one
 Thou mockedst with feignèd love, yet fatal ; one
 Who now forgives.

LUCIFER. So vast my sense of wrong

To such is, nor to such alone, nor man
 Only, in mass, but all create ; the woe
 Of memory so overwhelming, there is nought
 My grief to alleviate, though of life assured
 Henceforth serene and rational, dared I near
 The shadow but of thy footstool, save to quench
 This soul-force deathless of itself, and hurl
 To naked nought the incommutable life
 Linked with the passed for ever.

GOD.

Spirit, know

The same Omnipotence which from thought all made
 Can by like power illimitable, all ill
 Make to all good subservient ; and that first
 Based in the imperfect lowliest, cope at last
 With absolute perfection. In all worlds
 Of temporal range, to soul imperfect, ill
 As test of soul ; shows needful ; and, as tests
 Seek alway, if they sometimes fail, to win
 Perfection, know, I, sole of Being, free
 To act, as answerable but unto myself ;
 Of all laws source and end, which bind for good
 The whole ; laws competent to embrace, to rule,
 Nourish, sustain all things ; I yet being more
 And greater than all laws by me made ; laws
 'Gainst me unuseable by the total force
 Of all create conjured dread not, nor need,
 Weighing, as righteous judge, the sum of powers
 Subaltern, aught their armed feebleness,
 With all aids leviable 'gainst me colleagued,
 Could compass. Nor, dread therefore thou, because
 Vanquished, subject, necessity to me
 Should counsel endless punishment of sense,
 Or instant end of life ; pain, evil, death,
 Foes finite all can pity ; how much more
 The Father, souls made primely bright and pure,
 Be it since, sin-soiled : too cognizant he of all
 He makes ; and making knows ; too 'ware of all
 Failing, who fails not ; but appeased by due
 Repentance, and the offending spirit's return
 Self-impulsed, to the eternal order lawed
 Of God from first, love, justice, virtue, peace.
 As imperfection's lot it is to seek
 Ever, but never in itself to achieve
 Perfection, I, of every Being sole,
 Free absolutely, and necessary alike,
 Have, as a man who puts a girdle on,
 Girt me with law ; and draw or loosen at will,
 In arbitrary delight. But fear not thou,
 The all-righteous, howbeit self-exempt from all
 Law liens, and unhinderable, should err
 By anger, or by love too partial ; just
 In all. He not to reprobation dooms

Endless, who may have sinned, or thwarted most,
 Or most neglects ; but such even, wiselier taught
 By Time, great expert of the world, to bliss
 Final shall save, so please He ; these by mean
 Perfective ; these by use untasked of power
 Inscrutable, precreative.

SONS OF GOD.

Lord, to thee,

Thy fulness much, thy mercifulness more,
 Pertain all rights, all pure prerogatives.

GOD. All angel world, not wiser once than thee,
 Their more than peer in power, Heaven's laws desire,
 To see through space established and help spread.
 Yet, spirit of ill, thy heart shows hard and green,
 Unmellowing, hardening rather outwardly.

LUCIFER. Naught less than sudden sunburst, it may be
 Of ripening light, shall serve. As yet forbear.

GOD. Draw nigh, ye angels, who long time with hope
 Inspired, but scarce with expectation touched,
 Of heavenly pardon, and with conscious will
 Of betterment and of penitence moved, have strove
 My grace to attract, and bring your spirits again
 To the orderly progress of all good, approach.
 Lo ! ye are all restored, redeemed, rebrought
 To Heaven, by Him who justly cast ye forth,
 Not vengefully, your God, who mercy shows
 To good and ill both, in sequestering sin,
 Nor can the pure humanity of your God
 All-being, let suffer woe for aye ; not those
 Who most have wronged him, and the souls he loves.
 For his murderers Christ on earth forgiveness asked ;
 And that he would, I will. The Sage of Auz,
 Unjustly accused, for his revilers' sins
 Himself atoned, by innocent sacrifice ;
 The wise Athenian, doomed by ignorant judge
 Iniquitously, to drain the empoisoned bowl,
 Freely forgave his enemies ; nor shall man
 Be juster, nor more merciful than God ;
 Nor thing made than its Maker more perfect.
 The fount love draws from is too deep for mere
 Creation to exhaust, draw he, draw ye
 Angels, eternally. Your primal fall,
 Unfathomable, till stayed, of thought create
 Was ; man's has ever been ; the wilful choice
 Of pravity and of pride, for truth and right ;
 For free revolt, 'gainst service to just law.
 Each hating in his breast that wistful judge,
 Hight conscience, by me set, of right and wrong ;
 Else of ourself no image man ; nor more
 Angel, of God. But made, and to themselves
 Left, arbitrary, to order through all life
 Their every step, each motivated, shall aught less
 Than self iustration of the spirit divine,

Agewise, through worlds, (if need so long to attune
 The soul to those presecular harmonies
 Of mind with things create, yon spherulic songs
 Foreshadow luminously;) be worthy deemed
 To appease law's wounded majesty, and good's
 Due give to God? But God the Saviour's face,
 In likeness shewn of penitence pure, to all
 Open who've sinned through the whole infinite,
 The reascendant soul may seek; and, proved
 Its perfect change, the all-chastened world of mind
 Reseeks its fatherly source.

ANGELS.

Yon distant skies

Seem teeming with a timidly nearing host
 Of angels late self-exiled, who scarce know
 Their seats of old constellate still in heaven.

SAINTS. O marvellous mercy, God e'er blessing all.

ANGELS. Behold they come, the legions of the lost,
 Transformed already by the bare behest
 Of God our Maker to the purest forms
 Of seraph lustre.

GOD.

These have but fulfilled

Defect's extreme contingency: nor without
 Such sequence, in its compass deepening oft
 To risk of evil, in man, so subordinated, free
 By nature, can things made act of themselves
 Or interact. Not theirs perfection; worse
 And better rounds all life, all conscious act.
 Air, water, earth, each vital element
 Acts downwards; fire, all destruent, sole aspires;
 And ends in upper air; so, mind create
 Self-stranged from God, through death, pernicious mean,
 To Him, in man returns; in angel, void
 Of gross mortality, soul transfigure, ne'er,
 In agony, all its luminous essence lost,
 But doubly brilliant, as the morning star
 Steeped in Heaven's longest dark, beams, nearing whilst
 Its life-fount, through ill all good consumed;
 Be all received.

THE RESTORED ANGELS. But thine Lord all the praise
 And ours submissive thanks; thine, Lord! who mad'st
 The universe that alike its good and ill
 Praise thee, the soul supreme.

SAINTS.

O say, ye risen

From life unblessed, how came the end we see?

RESTORED ANGELS. Protecting souls, how, hear. Ye doubtless
 marked

From these rejoicing heights where never war's
 Dark storm-cloud blots the blue serene of day
 Eternal, hell's late feud; when evil had done
 Its worst, and we 'gainst God's all-mastering power
 Had fought, and failed in ruin of the kind ends
 Thou Lord hadst planned for man, and, seeing how vile

How vast our wreck, which all we e'er had done
 Or schemed, involved ; which shewed how baffled all,
 Complot or field ; how hopeless grew ill's strife
 'Gainst good divine ; and minding us of need
 Like boundless, wisdom promised to all soul
 Fixed on self-betterment penitently, there rose
 On us, a twilight dawn of reason, eclipsed,
 Long, woefully, but e'er brightening, till we viewed
 In heaven's true light gradual, our wretched deeds,
 Soul-torturing now, and all the unholy frauds
 We had, self-blinded, mocked our sight with ; saw
 Unworthy of rational virtues, so endowed
 As we, with means of growth in excellence ; powers
 Incapable not, to range with those on high
 Who, through good, rule ; one sole step ta'en, and held
 That spatial step we took ; and in ourselves
 Repentant resolutely of all passed ill,
 Done and devised ; the insuppressive groan
 Hell, startled at the shock, heard ; and far round
 All orbs, the wailing echoed of our woe.
 This heardst thou, piteous Judge ; and over all
 Came peace. Then God most blessed us, and forgave.
 Made pass through purifying spheres, of will
 Testful, and act probationary, of thought.
 Oh ! he hath triumphed over all the world
 In mercy, over earth and death and hell.

GOD. The obduracy of Evil still pervades
 The spirit of pride discomfited ; as when first
 Rebel ; or say we might, " Hear, Spirit, and live ;
 Thy followers following, light reseek, and peace :
 And thou who camest to heaven one soul to claim,
 Remain possessed by all ; the sons of bliss
 Shall welcome thee again and all thy hosts ;
 Of whom thou first in glory as in woe
 Last ; brightest now, as darkest late, shalt shine ;
 Take, Lucifer, thy place ; this day redeemed
 Be thou to archangelic state ; bright child
 Of morn, once more, beam forth thou, fair and free
 O'er all light's starry armaments ; and thou,
 Highest, then humblest, of all soul create,
 Thus vanquished, adversary of good, by good,
 And thus restored ; death slain ; sin quelled ; all ill
 Convert ; bid darkness cease ; and all be light.

LUCIFER. Such ne'er can be.

GOD.

Such must be.

ANGELS.

By thy word,

All-quickenings, Lord ! even he may yet adore
 Thy mercy ; and the mystery that of old
 Ill seemed to many a soul, to all made plain
 And good become in God's design, the hour
 Of fate, thou hast said it, failless, shall arrive.

ANGELS. That hour may all abide, and bide in joy.

GOD. God's gifts are e'er of increase. For this cause
Receive ye tenfold of all gifts and powers ;
Yours once of old.

LUCIFER. I cannot live on hope.
All mind reverts to its original source
As clouds self-emptied in their generant main.

GOD. And you ye saints rejoice ; that reign of old
Foretold, millennial, ceased, love all, the truth
Shall dwell in and fulfil all spirit create ;
Hallow and quicken ; that longed for reign, with heaven's
Identic, of humanity pure, alone
Subsidiary to God's, must disappear.
The spirit of just humanity divinized
No more extern to Deity, yields at once
To Him its 'mediate Being ; and by the loss
Of separateness all gaining, man with God
Unites, as even in firmamental light
One, universal, hides each several star.
So creatures all in deity : all created
Intelligence circled in Heaven's boundless wheel,
All ends in the initial centre crowned,
The central infinite which imbounds all made ;
Their conquests are my conquests ; every truth
They have mastered, mine own verity ; all their lore,
The eternal wisdom ere all worlds conceived.

KOSMIEL. Be glad O world of worlds ; rejoice, all life ;
And mourn no more ; death, evil, suffering, cease.

SAINTS. Yea death and hell have passed away ; the extremes
Of space no longer blurred with the foul reek
Of spheres sin-tormented ; heaven pure and calm
Cored in God's infinite unity, see the whole.

GOD. For that my grace is greater than the world,
Mine essence vaster than the universe,
All recreated life exalted now
To union with its author, the divine
Foundations of their Being all may see ;
And know that though on all the fine I fixed
Of finitude ; on soul's works, and its results ;
Its aids, its theories, temporal and eterne ;
Woes self-begotten ; self-conceived deserts
And misconstructions of the All Merciful One,
When come the end of all, which none but I
Know, nor can know, it is mine, the whole made pure
By perfect annihilation of ill to enfold
In mine own infinite Being, and in all
The life of love imbreathe, of good, of God.
One sole salvation possible is of soul
Create, the universal, ultimate God,
When finite things He made, made He for nought ?

ANGEL. Thou madst them for thy pleasure, Lord, our good.

GOD. Can I find pleasure in a world of woe ?
Man good, or angel joy, in endless sin,
Sin aimless ? Can soul rational, if misled

By evils false presentments, so contest
 Its being's primal law as hope to prove
 Profit or pleasure permanent in ill?
 And I, who, say ye, seek mine end in joy
 Boundless, that find, or this, in creature pain?

ANGEL. Thou, God, art lord of equity and right;
 Nor couldst so disproportioned end and mean,
 In that thou hast made, ordain. One law the world
 Of reason and of desert pervades; of well
 Separative from ill.

GOD. Ye judge as I, the truth.
 To soul finite, fine finite sole, is due.
 Where art thou spirit, or man, that's infinite?
 Where, angel essence, where thou orbfal world?
 Not I, of Being the one sole infinite Cause,
 Could so have made thee? And who, therefore, else?
 Know ye unwisdom, hate, things limited, caused
 By bounded faculties, once opposed to Heaven,
 As fall angelic, human fall, both prove,
 Must, in the end, to love and wisdom, powers
 Of source divine, immeasurable, for good
 Of others, inexhaustible, succumb;
 Boasting themselves as vanquished by an arm
 Not than Almighty less. For this, because
 Justice is justly punitive, albeit not
 In chastisements annihilant, as conceived
 Full oft, by trembling guilt, in divers lands,
 And sundry times, such being all then that men
 Could bear with or assimilate, not till now
 Might man mine whole of meaning know, or you
 Learn our entire intent. One law there is
 In every world the same, man, angel, fiend
 Each of necessity made imperfect; this
 Righteous, as ye who here dwell; and these twain,
 Fallen, but losing ne'er the power to rise
 If so they will, being free. Its issues see.

ANGELS. The wise of old thine acts unpublished held
 Holy and just; expounded, we adore.

GOD. Evil to soul create means opposite.
 Of what to her in outward guise shews good,
 In act or thought; thus death, to all which live;
 Corruption and decay. But in my sight
 Know, absolute evil never was, is not,
 Nor could it ever be. I made the world;
 Called it by mine own name, and named it good;
 The infinite whole, as circumscribed in me.
 All things I made to be good, and good is bliss,
 Free choice to prove, and need of grace needs not
 Fireflames to be eternal, feigned by o'erzeal
 In God's behalf. Freewill most perfect, pure,
 Hath still a limit, my will, all ellipse
 Of thought create, outcircling; if with mine
 Co-apt, infinite virtually; opposed,

Fate's indefeasible right revives. So deem
 Hate against me (sin, what else) limitless,
 In conscious spirit, its author I, must mean
 Such being were best not being ; and so in God
 Defectible judgment ; folly in wisdom. Far
 From nature's mind, glorying in reason, fly
 Such base, unhallowed thought. The worlds I made,
 That I in them might joy, and they in me.
 The dayfly's life I have made enjoyment. Life
 Angelic, boundable not by fellow mind,
 Should I make, sensible of unbounded woe ?
 Though fail the imperfect, left to itself, to weigh
 Perfection's warnings, or the fateful proof
 Of self incompetency itself to rule
 And thus by ill corrupt, wrong willing, sin
 Suffering in time-state righteous penalties
 Proportioned to sin's voluntary offence,
 Yet justice increate grants final grace
 From him who founded all ; of all defect
 All perfect source ; sole answerable cause.
 Know too, in him who wronged 'twas better, choice
 To have of good and ill with life, than not ;
 Though, after, justly fined for choice of wrong.
 Better for him who suffered ill, to enjoy
 The sense of Being, than ever not to have been.
 Regard, too, had to the heavenly recompense,
 For innocence, that ; for tested virtue this.

LUCIFER. But who shall see the end of Evil ?

BENIEL.

Who saw

Its rise and fixed its limits.

LUCIFER.

And how wrought

This great effect ?

BENIEL.

Spirit of troublous ill,
 Who most on earth, but in all spheres thou might'st,
 Hast e'er, with all the necessary defects
 Of creatural nature, even as pestilence
 With a city's breathable air, so joined thyself
 As to seem one with evil, not alone
 In the world's eyes but thine own too, this may pass
 All creature power to say ; pass even our will,
 Desire, and aspiration. It may be
 That, each of each discombered, in the end,
 First faith so working in thee, thee restored
 To the angel perfectness thou once adorn'dst,
 And closed the great procession led by truth
 Of soul create, that all the imperfect oned
 With its great source, the all perfect, ignorance filled
 To the lip with Divine wisdom ; evil gone
 Out of the world that was, like one dark wave
 Merged in a sea of light ; and in the world
 To be, unknown ; God's grace shall all sustain ;
 And ill and darkness banished, He shall rest,
 The Eternal Reason, with all things He hath willed

Into being, made, administered, content ;
 He, they, alike ; each naming other, good.

GOD. Mind free, but limited, and imperfect, fails
 In due conception, justly inadequate
 Of my divine intents to creatures known
 As fate, doom, destiny ; evil, so, and good
 War spiritual wage which lasts while time lasts. Here
 Good losing nought is made divine ; and ill,
 Sloughing its selfish personalty, becomes,
 Transfigured in ascent, the all redeemed
 Commensurate with soul-kind ; and mind finite,
 Distinct from, yet with Deity perfused,
 The whole is peace ; divisive nature ends.
 Truth only unitive marks the spirit's path,
 An endless radius from a boundless point
 Of all comprising Being ; in itself
 Of pure perfection. All created mind
 Whate'er its power, how far soe'er it fly
 This parent point, hath limit to its force ;
 And active thought its essence ; and retained
 By attraction consubstantive must revolve
 Around its spiritual centre.

ANGELS.

God.

GOD. Henceforth
 All thought of the now hallowed world of life,
 Tends to communion with the Infinite One,
 Communion vital, virtual and divine,
 Wherein is bliss supreme.

BENIEL.

O, ever blessed
 Of all thy rational universe, thy love
 So hallows that it stoops to, that made mind
 Great with a something greater than itself
 Conceived of Deity, its most lofty thought
 With the aureole crowned of sanctity, howe'er
 Below Divinity's vast companionship,
 Self consecrate to thee, we pray thee take
 The all that's ours, ourselves.

GOD.

I, too, of soul
 Sole parent ; of the soul-world sire, as Lord
 Of the unbegotten world, who have so adjudged
 The substance of all beings, all their powers
 And qualities to their preconcerted end ;
 Their faculties to the good they might achieve ;
 Their duties to their just deserts ; the truths
 They have compassed, to their possible deeds, and feats
 Actual ; 'like sacred, powers and weaknesses ;
 All bid make glad with me. For not the tears
 Of nature's life-birth, nor time's death-pangs passed,
 Nor all persistent woes of transient life,
 Could other do than justice justify
 In all power made, and wisdom dowered, and love
 United ; were not this compassionate heart,
 Calm-pulsed as a Pacific, and these eyes

Cloudless as upper skies unvexed, unveiled,
 (Yet searchful as the wind through woods), my first
 And last of assessors, their Lord remind
 How the inabilities of things made are not,
 Less than their potency, holy.

BENIEL.

Be it, O God!

Justice and mercy are thine attributes;
 Thine essence, love. Set up thy glory, Lord!
 In pure humanity common and divine
 Through all the star-world.

GOD.

Nature, spirit of life,

Not soul to me responsible, hath had all
 She can have, not being goddess. I, in thee,
 Therefore, created spirit, of all my love
 Son, whole and sole; albeit not perfect, free;
 Though fallible, thou, amiable, in thee more glad
 Than even in me thou, call all heavens to see
 And their souls satisfy, that howbeit both
 In one thrice holy Spirit once joined, unite,
 Throughout time's severance from eternity,
 And the soul's spacious world-field, 'gainst all ill;
 And each, his several way, with conquest crowned;
 'Tis I, who substituting for law divine
 Of righteousness and justice, equity
 To broad humanity all where, and the worlds
 Of mutable course angelic, thus fulfil
 An infinite sacrifice; greater far than all
 Of secondary existence could for me;
 Though theirs to me more due than mine to them;
 Their victory but the type and shadow of mine,
 The exterminator of evil.

SAINTS.

Praise we God!

GOD. Yet would not I such gift; save of free will
 And that divine constraint of rational good
 Which perfect adds to perfect; and all souls
 And soul-worlds, binding its amplest verge,
 Gives, in the end, to all, felicity.

BENIEL. All hallowing Deity, all parent Power;
 Thy throne the crown of Heaven, thy crown thy name,
 Thy name the ever blessed, the Lord of life;
 Bliss-giver thou, who art the bliss of all,
 Be thy soul satiate with this victory.
 It is for thee this universal war
 Thou bad'st, I fought and closed; I, and mine hosts,
 All thine. 'Tis the hope of thine approval nerves
 'Neath nobler leaders, chosen, and cheered by thee
 Alway our upward wing, that all by thee
 Sanctified, might in spirit to thee return,
 To their all centering source. For thee, we gain.
 This heavenly victory, who couldst all by a word
 Subdue; for ourselves, this holy rest, thy peace;
 Celestial, recreative. Peace we know
 Is thine for ever, thought-transcending peace,

Infrangible, inassailable. All our days
 Are not as one of thine. Thy days, O God !
 Nor morn nor eve comprise. We, starlets pale,
 Time's dawns note, its noonings, and its night ;
 While thou full many a firmamental arch,
 Bow-bender of the heavens, hast changed, and changed
 Unmarked by other. Lo ! even I have seen
 The mountain of creation, all whose sands
 Were starworlds, called eternal by made mind,
 Ray finite, of the all central infinite,
 Like to a night-born islet, mid the main,
 Sink in the void abysmal whence it rose.
 But thou art changeless, causeless, unconceived,
 Uncomprehended God. Thee, let all Heaven,
 Prostrate in infinite silence, worship, Lord !
 Whose fane's the world, whose sanctuary the soul.

OURIEL. Lift up your starry heads, ye angel sons
 Of the Eternal ; God is throned in heaven.

KOSMIEL. Lift up your starry voices, all ye spheres ;
 Let all creation from its innermost heart
 Sound forth one song of ceaseless, boundless praise.

FESTUS. How joys the soul redeemed ; joys, as when first,
 On the horizon of God's awful eye,
 Some world He hath willed into existence beams,
 And gladdens in his glance, whose look is love.

LUNIEL. What infinite wonders we have witnessed here,
 And now the greatest this, of all most blessed,
 Triumphant, all embracing good, the whole
 Concordant, one made with the one supreme.
 For, as in things material, force all rules,
 In matters spiritual weakness wins ; as once
 Of old, on the angel visioned plain, thou sawest
 Wrestler with God, and prince ; so, once again,
 It is God's humanity prevails with God.

FESTUS. Unsearchable are His ways, his works.

ANGEL.

But not

Dubious, when shown. In this most luminous life,
 Shined through by deity, and wherein the worlds,
 God's vast and palpable thoughts transpicuous range,
 The outcome, soul ! behold, of all good deeds,
 Though profitless misdeemed on earth ; all aims
 Which, faultless in themselves, failed ; hopes well based
 Frustrate, not fruitless, in the eternal plan,
 Not futile ; but to the soul advantageous ;
 Here roots of duty set in natural mould
 Of heart-love, social virtues, freely bloom ;
 And, fragrant though below, they oftentimes showed
 Blighted, and irresponsible to just hope.
 These are the flowers that now unwithering wreath
 The immortal brows of saints, and shed far round,
 Perfume of holy hilarity. And as marked
 On earth through some dark cloud-cleft, travelling swift,
 The light-shaft, downward shot from the sun's broad eye,

Illumed successive mount, spire, city or sea ;
 So points God's finger, brightening all the dark
 Of being, fate's favourite secrets, one by one,
 To spirits benign, of reason sanctified,
 And to saints prepared, permitted truths profound,
 In wisdom's breast hid : all the problems, dark
 And intricate, of existence, solved ; we, taught,
 Thus by Omniscience.

ANGELA. Here too, in the soul,
 How brightened and refined through every sphere,
 As a light-ray, urged through various lenses, sheds
 At each, some passionate colour, till it stands,
 Sweet in untinted whiteness, at the gates
 Of reasonablest perfection, thou mayst learn,
 All tendencies of good, all rarest powers,
 And faculties of spirit made holy, pure,
 Potent to imbue receptive mind with sense
 Of beauty, spiritualized and sanctified,
 Have full fruition ; scope unlimited ; end
 Boundless ; all plans prolific of the weal
 Of worlds, and sanctioned by God's sign of good,
 Their harvest through the appointed ages reap.

GUARDIAN ANGEL. That sinners be made holy, sin itself
 By righteousness commute, and vital bliss
 Out of deadliest suffering wrought, (though to finite mind
 From God divergent, strange,) astounds not soul
 Affiliate to divinity ; for what else
 More contrary can show than heaven thus full
 Of being, innumerable, wise, virtuous, blessed,
 And the black void whence all things, at his word
 Leapt into life, and starred the skies with light ?
 That flame should heavenward soar, or waters fall,
 Or ice evolve heat, mind no more confounds
 Than that who fallible stood should sometime fail.
 Why that who fell, should rise ? All evil but gives
 Just scope for God's benevolence, mightier still,
 Who forms all natures, and at will transforms ;
 Happy in making happy, O spirit elect
 Of Heaven and earth, and using to best ends
 This life-world, and its universal powers.
 Thus, too, with the angels once estranged, at last,
 Atoning by obedience meet to God ;
 Oh doubly blessed and trebly worshipped name,
 Of all in Heaven, or earth, or under earth !
 Self exiled from affairs mundane ; and now,
 For selfish rule, inexpiable else,
 And cruel, reckless deed ; for impious thought
 Of mock prerogative, or of title robbed ;
 Misconstrued love, and means of grace thrust back ;
 They, with perpetual penitence contrite,
 And all asbestine soul-purgation, passed,
 In limitless progression exaltate,
 Through conduct, aspiration and intent,

In Nature's gifts, and excellencies made pure ;
 Life's charities and sanctities ; while o'er all
 The sentient chords of sympathy viewless sketched
 To tested spheres its spiritual, which unites
 With the vital worlds of virtue and rational light,
 Lines so demonstrant of God's aim to adapt
 To parallels of responsible choice, each act
 Of duty ; so commensurate each degree
 Of just obedience there to bliss here, earned
 Celestially, that not to see the fair
 Congruities of the eternal world with time's
 Conditions, where'er placed, were nor to know,
 Nor be. As in heaven, this central infinite,
 The vast concerted laws of general being,
 In God's ear hallowed all and harmonized,
 Blend spiritually, and that peace intense express
 Created mind can neither sum nor sound,
 So on man's soul, and natures like to his,
 Of good and ill mixed, not infallible, falls
 The calm most sweet, of orderly judgment born,
 They share who enter heaven : those first who come
 By grace divine forechosen, to prove his love
 Greater than law, himself than all he hath made :
 Vouched for of God, who careful guides the paths
 Of saints on earth, with this hand, as with that,
 The world ; and these through training laws who pass
 All tests, triumphant, tests, the touch of God,
 He proves the virtue of souls by ; but beyond,
 Their powers tries none, nay always far within ;
 So, in all temptations justified ; and this
 One backward glance make clear ; think thou on thine,
 For here, man's course, whate'er refining spheres
 He pass through, shows with strictest relevance
 To the passed, no error possible, every age
 Brightening the soul, all-verifying time
 All grades of being accomplished, all desires,
 All aspirations crowned, each with the one
 In absolute union rests.

FESTUS. All see I, now
 And, Heaven within the spirit, the whole divine.
 Before God's all felicitating love
 All earth-love pales ; how pure soe'er, or dear ;
 And worship, sense of immanent deity,
 Labouring within the spirit to burst forth
 Into supreme expression of all truth,
 Circling the soul as with a glory cloud.
 One spirit alone I sought and seek in heaven
 To know ; and one sole spirit on earth diffused
 'Mong men ; the spirit of truth, and love, and peace.
 All find I here at last, man's heaven, and God's.

ANGELS. All praise, all love, all worship Lord, be thine :
 Thy mercy even reach this spirit of Ill ;
 Who vanquished both by man and angel, broke

In spirit (as some precipitate cloud pours forth
 Its shadowy substance, in a world of tears)
 Now vents apart his inly minishing force
 In sighs profuse, if wordless, hopeless, not.
 GOD. But Ill must be annihilated.

ANGELS.

He, Lord!

Is not all evil. Thou did give him being ;
 And Being is of itself, a living good.

GOD. He left us of his own free will, he hath seen
 Our good triumphant through the world ; his ends
 Frustrate ; his evil, evil not, but made
 In his despite, subservient to Heaven's good.
 Let him crave mercy towards himself.

ANGELS.

He seems

To waver ; but is silent. All is doubt.

FESTUS. Who can survey the world's vast ways and woes,
 He hath passed through, times extinct ; all orbs like earth,
 Seed sunborn, increment of ageless light,
 Founded in strata deep and dim of stars ;
 Beyond those skies, the camp of light, where gleams
 The bannered sun, God's oriflamme ; beyond
 Each sun-star space knows, beaming out his life
 Godwards, in glorious gratitude of light ;
 Passed all time's mutable opposites, act and rest ;
 The mighty sequences of light and night ;
 Systems scarce form deforms, so pure, so nigh
 To the unconditionate sphere, this dome divine,
 The infinite which all finite bounds ; nor feel
 Soul worship, humblest, unitive with him
 Maker of good, exterminator of ill ;
 Saviour of all perfectible essence, God,
 The highest bliss of being, being knows ?
 Wherefore let us him ceaselessly adore,
 Active or meditative, as wisdom wills.
 Praise Him ye chosen of the earth and skies,
 Ye visible raylets of the invisible light,
 Blend with the universal heaven, your hymns ;
 Immortal leaflets of love's holy flower,
 Breathe forth your perfume of eternal praise.

ANGEL. Come let us join our souls to the glory song
 By man and angel sung, all saved, to God.

THE SAVED. Father of goodness ; Lord of love,
 Spirit of comfort, Be with us,
 God who hast made us, God who hast saved,
 God who hast judged us, Thee we praise.
 Heaven our spirits ; Hallow our hearts ;
 Let us have God-light, Endlessly.
 Ours is the wide world, Heaven on heaven ;
 What have we done Lord, worthy this ?
 Oh we have loved thee ; That alone
 Maketh our glory, Duty, meed.
 Oh, we have loved thee ; Love we will,
 Ever and every Soul of us.

God of the tempted ; God of the tried ;
 God of the lost once, Be with all,
 Thou who hast proved us ; God of the free,
 Lord of the perfect, Be all thine,
 Chosen ere all time, Servants of truth,
 Thee in our life sphere, Chosen have we.
 Let us be near thee, Ever and aye,
 Oh, let us love thee, Infinite.

FESTUS. So soul and song begin and end in heaven,
 Your birth-place and your everlasting home.

ANGELS. In heaven extolled all souls now saved, of earth
 All saints and angels, chosen thy will to effect
 O God, confess thy pure and pious ends.
 All government, sway and empire is at last
 United here, the kingdom sole of heaven,
 Meant from the first for universal rule.
 In view of boundless bliss, all creatural power,
 Essentially defective, shall in Thee
 Henceforth enjoy perfection ; and both sons
 Of God, angelic, human, teach the souls
 Victors through God, eternal virtue's truth ;
 Adding sustaining grace to every thought
 Hallowed by thee, by thee all thought inspired.
 Divine and holy is thine every work,
 Eternal only as ordained by thee,
 Unknown but to thyself, who dost remain
 Steadfast in love, though heaven and earth rebel,
 All blessing God, who with thy boundless love,
 Dost fill with deity heaven, and make the soul
 Of man expand with immortality,
 Now we with him in fourfold joy rejoice ;
 And all the heavenly hierarchies of light,
 In every word fulfilled, thy grace adore.
 The Gods are one God, and all power is his.
 High over all, and deep in all dost thou
 E'er rule, whate'er their mediate end, all wills,
 On all thy throne is based ; and round all thou
 Stretchest the line of justice limitless.
 All sway be thine, Lord ! heaven and earth are one
 In universal gladness. World by world
 Night renders up to thee the fruit of light
 Sown in her bosom, reaped and ripening here.
 Unutterably blessed all soul to approach
 Perfection in the infinite ; not opposed ;
 How far soe'er, now, still to thee allied,
 All sanctifying Lord of love and might,
 Let whole creation testify to thee ;
 As vice to virtue, darkness to the light.
 Hell thus to Heaven, and man to Deity.
 Glory to thee our God, who, all to prove,
 On earth by law, by grace, here, law above,
 Dost show the great I am, the all I love.

BENIEL. All-father ! Let the worlds foredoomed to cease,

Cease ; but man's soul thy living breath, to thee
 By natural expiry returned, and freed
 Essential from all death, and of thyself
 Deific, saved, let all in thee be one,
 Immutable made, and homed 'mid thy wide arms,
 World maintenant, seek the shadows of thy breast.

ANGELS. God all in all, the All-perfect, He with heaven
 Earth, and all spheres and every human soul,
 And angel spirit He hath made, makes glad ;
 Reflecting we with infinite content
 His promises of neverfailing truth.
 Time there hath been when only God was all ;
 And it shall be again. The hour is named,
 When evil exterminated from every sphere,
 And Angel Saint, man, every spirit create,
 Though more or less imperfect, tested, tried,
 Self-fined, and, passed thought, purified ; uplift
 Above their present state ; drawn up towards God
 Like dew into the air, shall be all heaven ;
 And all souls shall be in God, and shall be God,
 And nothing save God be.

BENIEL. Let all be God's !

GOD. World without end, and I am God alone
 The aye, the infinite, the whole, the One,
 I only was ; nor matter else, nor mind ;
 The self contained Perfection unconfined.
 I only am ; in might and mercy one ;
 I live in all things, and am closed in none.
 I only shall be ; when the worlds have done,
 My boundless Being will be but begun.

L'ENVOI.

READ this, world ! He who writes is dead to thee,
 But still lives in these leaves. He spake inspired :
 Night and day, thought came unhelped, undesired,
 Like blood to his heart. The course of study he
 Went through was of the soul-rack. The degree
 He took was high : it was wise wretchedness.
 He suffered perfectly, and gained no less
 A prize than, in his own torn heart, to see
 A few bright seeds : he sowed them—hoped them truth
 The autumn of that seed is in these pages.
 God was with him ; and bade old Time, to the youth,
 Unclench his heart, and teach the book of ages.
 Peace to thee, world !—farewell ! Be God, whose power's
 Infinite, love and grace deific, ours !

14 DAY USE
RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED
LOAN DEPT.

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